

Mary Penni

Haworth

Miss A Stanfield
in kind remembrance of
Jane McGowan died 25 June
1883

THE

WARD OF THE CROWN.

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WARD OF THE CROWN.

A HISTORICAL NOVEL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

“SEYMOUR OF SUDLEY,” “THE POPE AND THE ACTOR,”
“THE FORESTER’S DAUGHTER.”

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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CHAPTER I.

IT is well known that the Earl of Richmond advanced from the coast of Wales, beyond the city of Lichfield, without any of the great English lords having declared openly in his favor, or contributing to swell the numbers of his small army. But though even his father-in-law, Lord Stanley, was amongst the number, compelled by the ty-

rannical policy of Richard the Third, to feign fidelity to his cause, he no doubt contrived to encourage the young invader by secret promises of service, and both he and his brother, Sir William Stanley, found means to hold an interview with him, in a small field near Atherston, when their plans, for the future, were probably arranged.

The Earl of Richmond had accounted for his absence from his army, on the night of his meeting with Hubert, by pretending a similar engagement with other noble friends, and his hopes were speedily revived, and his courage renewed, by the daily accession of many honorable gentlemen to his ranks, as he marched towards Leicester

He, in the meanwhile, heard that the king had issued general proclamations throughout the kingdom, calling on all loyal men to take up arms to repel the contemptible invader, and his foreign troops, and when he encamped near the village of Bosworth, on the twenty-first of August, 1485, A.D., he learned, with considerable

anxiety, that Richard was posted, so as to intercept his march, at no considerable distance, with an army more than three times the number of his own.

Deeply pious, he spent the early part of the night in prayer—that night—during which Shakspeare, copying from the old historians, represents his rival Richard, as having been distracted by the troubled dreams of an evil conscience. But Henry Tudor was too prudent a man not to know that the events of the morrow must, with the blessing of Providence, depend greatly on his own caution, and aware that Lord Stanley, with three thousand followers, stood aloof, between the rival armies, his first act, after the conclusion of his devotion, was to write him a brief note in cypher. He then ordered Master Hubert Saville, one of Sir Gilbert Talbot's guard, to be conducted to his presence.

His next care was to consider various plans, for the approaching battle, nor did

he again look up from this important occupation, till Hubert stood before him.

The earl and the young soldier were again alone, yet the former gave no other sign of recognition, than by laying his finger on his lips for a moment, with a glance of peculiar meaning, ere he addressed his young defender as an entire stranger.

“I have reason to have confidence in your honor and your secrecy,” he said ; “ I have chosen you, therefore, to be the secret bearer of this letter to Lord Stanley. It will be more dangerous probably to return to, than to leave the camp, but I rely on your courage and dexterity, and shall expect to see you again before the battle commences at morn. Farewell.”

Hubert took the paper the earl held towards him with profound respect.

“ Your will shall be done, my lord,” he said, and fully comprehending that no more words were desired, he withdrew quickly from the tent, and proceeded without a

moment's delay to execute his difficult and dangerous task.

Long before the sun arose, the tranquillity of morning was disturbed by the harsh sounds of war, from both the rival camps, and many brave fellows sprang from their brief repose, who were not destined to behold the close of that eventful day. Richmond, cool, tranquil, and calculating, as in every other crisis of his fate, though he most anxiously expected the return of Hubert, did not, therefore, delay to put his men in order of battle.

Every moment scouts arrived, reporting the state of the enemy ; and the information they brought, as to the positions taken up by Lord Stanley and his brother, rendered the earl every moment more desirous of receiving some secret assurance of their support. Yet he had advanced more than a mile, ere his messenger was visible, leaping over hedge and ditch, and spurring on his foaming steed across the fields, as if life and death depended on his course. Richmond

recognised Hubert from afar off, but he betrayed no symptom of extraordinary interest, even when the young man was conducted towards him, and presented the letter, of which he was the bearer. Calmly he glanced over its contents, and a slight word of commendation was the only guerdon Hubert received.

When the young man resumed his place in the guard of Sir Gilbert Talbot, his mind was occupied by many and extraordinary thoughts. But though his own fortunes, and the fate of those most dear to him, long engaged his contemplations, even these were forgotten, when, on suddenly arriving at the summit of a rising ground, he beheld the whole army of Richard the Third drawn out in battle array.

The main body of horse and foot was extended to a marvellous length, that the appearance of this great mass of armed soldiers might be more terrible from a distance, and the archers were placed as a bulwark in front. John, Duke of Norfolk, and his son

Thomas, Earl of Surry, commanded this body. After this strong van-guard, followed King Richard himself, with a strong company of chosen and approved men of war. The wings were entirely composed of cavalry.

The Earl of Richmond, on the contrary, in consequence of the smallness of his army, formed his centre, somewhat weak and slender. In the front he placed his archers, under the command of the Earl of Oxford. Sir Gilbert Talbot he appointed leader of the right wing, whilst the left was assigned to Sir John Savage, who had brought with him a brave band, clad in white coats and hoods which produced a gallant effect when seen by the enemy afar off. The Earl of Richmond himself, accompanied by his uncle, Lord Pembroke, and a small body of horse and foot, directed the battle.

The whole of his force did not exceed five thousand men, whilst that of the king was more than double that number.

No sooner had the armies espied each

other, than the soldiers on both sides began to buckle their helmets, the archers to bend their bows, and flush the feathers of their arrows, and the billmen to try the shafts of their axes, ready to join in combat, when the trumpets should sound to victory or death.

The army of the Earl of Richmond had no sooner passed, by a circuit, the marsh that lay between his forces and those of the king, than Richard gave the order to charge.

Then did the trumpets blow, and the soldiers shout, and the royal archers let fly their arrows on the enemy, whose bowmen quickly returned the attack.

This shooting concluded, the armies joined, and neither bill nor axe was spared. By the Earl of Oxford's command, no man went more than ten feet from his standard ; and this gallant nobleman, almost at the same moment that Lord Stanley declared openly for the Earl of Richmond, bringing all his soldiers in a mass together, fell with renewed vigour on the main body of the enemy,

who repelled this attack with equal gallantry.

The king having learnt, whilst the battle raged the fiercest, that the Earl of Richmond was not far distant from him, with a feeble guard of men at arms, eager to decide the fate of the day, by a personal encounter with his enemy, put spurs to his white horse, Surry, and quitting the van-guard, rode furiously, with lance in hand, towards him. Sir William Brandon, the standard bearer of the earl, no sooner perceived his intention to attack his general, than he sprang forward to intercept him ; but, to his own destruction, unable, from the quickness of his movements, to take a proper position of defence, before he came in contact with the lance of the king, the first stroke pierced him through the heart, and he fell back from his rearing horse, with the standard of Tudor to the ground. Sir John Cheinie, a knight of great force and courage, quickly met with with the same fate, and another, and another followed.

Yet the Earl of Richmond, nevertheless, stood tranquilly on his guard, without making any effort to assist his vanquished friends. All he saw confirmed what he had often heard, that King Richard was the most gallant warrior of his time, and though he was not wanting in courage, yet, with the usual calculating prudence of his character, he felt by no means inclined to stake his life, and the future possession of a crown, on the hazard of a personal encounter with such an enemy.

But at length it appeared no longer possible for him to avoid the combat. Many of his guard were already slain, other engaged in fierce combat with the followers of the king, were unable to interpose in his defence. Richard cut down all before him in his fury, and there no longer remained a single fighting man, between these rivals for a crown, when Hubert, springing unexpectedly from the crowd of combatants, snatched the fallen standard of Sir William Brandon from the ground, and alone, and on

foot, threw himself, with axe in hand, before the Earl of Richmond.

With fearful curses Richard showered blow after blow on this unexpected opponent, but for long he successfully warded off the strokes with his battle axe, and the staff of the standard, cheered by the voice of the earl, who saw enough of the battle field, to know that his own fate, and that of England, depended on the few moments, for which the young soldier could arrest the progress of the king.

Proud were the feelings of Hubert's heart when he saw the blood of his country's cruel tyrant flow beneath his axe ; but the triumph cost him dear.

Richard, doubly enraged, when he felt himself wounded, by a powerful stroke of his sword, at once laid his youthful adversary with the slain, and springing over the body, attacked the Earl of Richmond hand to hand.

Most gallantly did Henry Tudor withstand his violence, and long kept him at his

sword's point, without advantage, but his men had all fallen around him, and every moment increased his danger, when a long, loud shout, and the rushing of a multitude towards them, proclaimed that Sir William Stanley, with three thousand men had arrived to his rescue.

In another minute, an armed crowd divided the noble combatants ; the followers of Richard were driven back, and fled before the half savage band of northern men, who formed part of Stanley's guard. The king alone, continued to fight, amidst the thickest of his enemies, heedless of victory ; when Stanley's desertion had taught him, that his crown was lost for ever, he sought only for death ; and the soldiers, dismayed by his prowess, began on every side, to give way before him, when a powerful and athletic man, of noble bearing, clothed in complete armour, with a sheep skin thrown as a mantle over his shoulders, and a tremendous battle axe in hand, stood suddenly before him. His visor was down, yet Richard knew by this extraordinary

garb, the leader of the northern men, Marston Conyers—the friend of the famous Robin of Redsdale, who had aided him to take prompt vengeance for the death of Lord Latimer, at the Battle of Hedgecote.

“We have met ere now, in bloody fields ; but this shall be thy last,” cried the outlaw, with a bitter laugh, as he returned the blows of the king, who quailed beneath his giant arm.

“I have met many a rascal in my time,” answered Richard, scornfully.

“None greater than thyself!” was the reply of Conyers, “and I avenge the blood of many guiltless men, when my sword pierces thy heart. Take that, for my right noble friend, Lord Wells, whom thou, and thy false brother, Edward, basely slew—take that for thy young nephew—that for thy wife—and that, for one whom all men, save I, have now forgotten—poor Brian Sandford—the Lollard, whom thou burnt, that thy base minion, Carlton, might possess his daughter. Take that and die, thou shalt be king no longer.”

Scarcely had the outlaw pronounced these words of doom, than Richard, who fought in gloomy silence, exhausted by his long combat, and previous loss of blood from his numerous wounds, and unable longer to ward off the blows of his adversary, fell beneath the heavy stroke of Conyer's enormous battle axe, his helmet absolutely crushed into his skull, like a thing of pasteboard.

The outlaw fought no more that day. There was only one other man on the field of battle, whom he would gladly have laid low, and that man was Carlton. But Carlton, like many others of the tyrant's friends, who had been able to escape his vigilance, had, with Lord Stanley, stood aloof during the first hours of combat, and then, by openly declaring in favor of Richmond, decided for ever, the destiny of Richard the Third.

When Conyers, unconscious that Hubert was lying bleeding not a hundred paces from him, turned away from the dead body of the king, the first object that attracted his attention, upon that field of carnage, was the

golden Crown of England, adorned with which, the sovereign had, that morning, ridden forth at the head of his troops, to fight for its possession ; and now, this symbol of a power overthrown, lay, with its master, covered with dust, and trodden under foot by the meanest clown that carried a crossbow in the battle.

“ And, it is for this poor toy, that the fair fields of England have been drenched with blood,” thought Conyers, as he raised it from the ground. “ For this, one hundred thousand of her men have perished in the civil wars ; for this, her princes and her nobles, have been slain on the battle field, or perished like miserable traitors on the scaffold, till the might of the aristocracy was crushed beneath the bloody sceptre of the cruel and suspicious tyrant, who, this day, is laid low.”

Engaged by such reflections, the moss-trooper passed to that part of the field, where Sir William Stanley stood with many distinguished gentlemen, conversing with the Earl

of Richmond, and watching the dispersion of the royal army, which now fled in all directions. Ere he arrived there, Lord Stanley, the father-in-law of the Earl, released from all anxiety, by the discovery of his son's safety—who had been kept a hostage by Richard—came with all his forces, to offer his congratulations to the conqueror ; and, Conyers was compelled to remain a quiet spectator of the scene, till tranquillity was again, in some measure, restored.

Of all the great men there assembled, there was none to whom he was personally known, except Sir William Stanley ; and, it was a considerable time, ere, amidst this agitated scene, he could find an opportunity of addressing him.

“ What wouldst thou, with me ? ” said the haughty knight, when, in compliance with a summons from Conyers, delivered by one of his esquires, he, at length, joined him behind a low tuft of bushes, which screened them from public view.

“ I wish to inform you,” said the trooper,

simply, “that I have, in my possession, an article of great value ; which, not long ago, was the property of the deceased king.”

“ Ha ! of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, you would say,” was the stern reply.

“ Of Richard, once Duke of Gloucester, and crowned King of England,” returned the outlaw, with not less severity.

“ And thou, a coward servitor of that base usurper, hast come to sell the plunder of thy master ?”

“ Sir William Stanley, who has, already, possessed himself of all the treasure, which the dead king had brought with him, in his baggage waggons for safety, is, surely, the last man who should reproach another for a petty robbery ;” replied Conyers, “ and, such noble examples of treason, have this day been given, that methinks, it can scarcely be charged against the humble as a crime. Yet, I am proud to declare, it is one of which, I, at least, am innocent. I never served King Richard when he lived, I never took his lar-

gesses, nor accepted his honors, nor pretended to befriend his cause, in order to turn my sword against him with the more advantage, when his fortunes wavered."

"Peace, fellow!" cried the knight, indignantly ; for this picture of his own conduct, stung him to the quick ; "if thou hast nothing else to communicate to me, but thy own worthless history, I can tarry no longer."

"I told you, that I had somewhat belonging to the dead king," returned the outlaw.

"To the dead king?" cried Stanley, sternly interrupting him. "Thrice hast thou repeated that phrase ! how knowest thou that Richard lives no longer ?"

"Because my axe hath slain him," was the trooper's cold and laconic reply.

"Ha ! can this be true ?" demanded Sir William, eagerly.

"As true, as that I bear his crown beneath my cloak," answered the outlaw, lift-

ing up his sheep's skin mantle, so as to disclose the royal diadem.

"By the saints, this is a most marvellous piece of good fortune!" exclaimed Stanley, in a totally altered tone, as he stretched forth his hand to snatch it. "This only was wanting, of all the usurper's treasure, and this completes the glory of the day."

"Hold, sir knight!" said Conyers, drawing back, so as to place the crown beyond his reach; "I have certain conditions to make, before I give this bauble to your keeping."

"Name them," said Stanley, "and, if they are not impossible, I swear to comply with them."

"First, then," returned the trooper, "be it known to you, that I am Marston Conyers, outlawed by Edward the Fourth, as a Lancastrian, and a presumed abettor of the execution of the queen's brothers. I have fought for the Earl of Rich-

mond, and I stipulate for a repeal of my attainder when he is king."

"That is a matter of course," said the knight.

"Not if he marries Elizabeth of York," was the reply. "Her uncle's executioner will not be regarded as a mere ordinary rebel."

"I will engage for your pardon," returned Stanley, impatiently; "What next do you demand."

"That Marion Sandford, whose father was burnt as a heretic, and herself accused of the same crime, be exonerated from this charge, and the confiscated property of her father restored to her."

"That too, shall be done, without fail," was the great man's reply.

"Dare I trust to these promises," said the outlaw, still hesitating to gratify the evident impatience of the knight.

"What, my brave fellow!" said the courier, "can you doubt, for a moment, that

when Henry of Richmond is called to throne of England, he will hesitate to grant such paltry favours to the man, to whom he is not only indebted for his crown, but for the removal of the bloody tyrant who stood between him and royalty ; who, though conquered, had he survived to-day, might have stirred up endless troubles and rebellion throughout the kingdom. I tell thee, I myself, may doubt his gratitude, and prove a traitor, if he forgets to reward thy services. Accept, therefore, of the word of a knight, and give me the crown.”

“ Pardon for Marion and myself,” was the sole reply of Conyers.

“ All, and each thing you demand, so sure as yonder sun shines forth without a cloud,” said Sir William. “ My interest will be great in the new court, and it shall be exerted to the utmost in your behalf.”

“ I can ask no more,” answered the gallant moss-trooper ; and, confiding in these solemn promises, such as he would have died rather

than break, he delivered his precious spoil—the Crown of England—into the hands of Sir William Stanley.

The knight scarcely tarried to thank him, and as he turned away with his prize towards the hillock, where the Earl of Richmond was conspicuous amidst the crowd of his newly declared friends. The anxiety of the outlaw returned.

“I was a fool,” he thought, “I ought to have carried it to Richmond myself, and delivered it into his own hand, without conditions, trusting to his gratitude and his mercy alone. That Stanley is but a proud, ambitious courtier, who is too much occupied in erecting his own fortunes, to trouble himself about fulfilling his promises to a poor soldier like Marston Conyers. Yet, I will try to hope better things, both for poor Marion and myself,” and with this resolution, he turned his steps from the battle field, towards the distant cottage, where he had left the faithful companion of his banished

years, to await the issue of the day's engagement.

But he had not proceeded many paces, ere he saw Sir William Stanley reach the side of the Earl of Richmond, and curiosity then arrested his steps. He plainly distinguished that he addressed the young general in animated language, which elicited many expressions of satisfaction from the surrounding courtiers, till suddenly displaying the crown he had at first concealed, he placed it on the head of Henry Tudor, and falling on his knees before him, did homage to him as his sovereign.

This example was quickly followed by all the assembled nobles, and then the Heralds proclaimed Henry Tudor, King of England, and called on the army to confirm the choice.

Long and loud acclamations followed from the assembled thousands, which seemed to echo to every corner of the land, till the young sovereign himself waving his hand, as a sign for silence, stood forth on

the brink of the hill, and addressed the multitude.

The grace and nobility of his tall and slender person made a favorable impression on all who beheld him, and those who heard his discourse seemed delighted with its tenour, for they perpetually interrupted him by long and boisterous acclamations. But Conyers was beyond the reach of his voice, and already convinced that, at such a moment, he would say nought that was not calculated to please his audience ; he make no effort to approach, and when the trumpets and voices of the Heralds, at length, proclaimed that Richmond was chosen King of England by the election of the people, by the style and title of Henry the Seventh, he again resumed his way in search of Marion.

“ I have done my utmost for the friends of Lancaster,” he thought, “ and now we must wait the pleasure of our new sovereign. We, poor creatures, are, after all, only the tools of the great, and when we think we are

serving our own ends, we are only wasting our lives, to minister to their ambition. If Stanley forgets me after all, I might as well have died where I have lived so long amidst the wilds of Redesdale.

CHAPTER II.

WE think it needless to dwell upon the ignominious manner, in which the body of Richard the Third, was borne from the field of battle, and cast into an unhonoured grave, or to trace the progress of his triumphant rival, Henry the Seventh, till his coronation on the 30th of October, 1483, and his subsequent recognition as King of England by the parliament, assembled on the seventh of the following month.

We will only briefly notice, that one of his first acts of authority, was to send an honourable escort to conduct his affianced wife, the Princess Elizabeth, from her prison at Sheriffehutten, to her mother, the Queen Dowager, then resident in London, there to wait till it was his pleasure to celebrate their marriage.

Ellen Collingwood, with many other honorable ladies, accompanied her on her journey, and the fair, young orphan, having found favor in the eyes of the princess, continued to reside with her, as one of her ladies of honour, after her arrival in the metropolis.

Carlton's timely change of party, on the field of battle, and his deeply laid intrigues, had saved him from the summary punishment, inflicted on most of Richard's favorites, who survived the fight at Bosworth, and he subsequently contrived, not only to escape attainder when the parliament passed an act of condemnation against the late king, and his principal adherents, but to retain his ill-

gotten wealth, and to enjoy the apparent favor of the new sovereign.

But whilst the secretary himself escaped, he had found means to have the name of Marston Conyers inserted amongst the list of traitors. Stanley, as the outlaw had too late foreseen, had thought no more of his promises, and almost forgotten the names of those he had engaged to serve ; whilst the Queen Dowager, on the contrary, ever mindful of the vengeance, she had vowed against all who had been engaged in her brother's execution, eagerly assisted Carlton in his secret efforts, to effect the destruction of Conyers. But though he failed to discover the retreat, where he had taken refuge, after his proclamation as a traitor, the secretary trusted that thus circumstanced, neither he nor Marion would dare to come forward, to charge him with the murder of Sir Hugh Collingwood, or the captivity of Lady Isabel, whom he still held his prisoner. Of Hubert's death he felt assured, having seen

him fall in the Earl of Richmond's defence.

During the whole of his long course of intrigue, he had never before felt so secure, and contented with his position, than when he had thus, apparently, escaped the dangers of a revolution, which had proved the destruction of many less skilful politicians. His vanity, his avarice, and his ambition, were equally gratified by his success, and two objects alone remained unattained—his marriage with Ellen Collingwood—and his elevation to the peerage.

Aware of the new king's passion for money, he did not scruple to degrade himself to the class of the vilest informers, to win his favor by the rich confiscations of those he betrayed, or belied, whilst he daily sought to secure favour with the Queen Dowager, and her daughter, the Princess Elizabeth, by the most abject flattery and subjection.

He was too vain, too blinded by vice, to perceive that the king, whilst he availed himself of his services, despised the vile

being of whose baseness he made a temporary use. Moreover, he had yet to learn that Hubert had not perished in the battle of Bosworth, as he rejoiced to believe.

Stunned for a while by the blow he had received from Richard the Third, it was true he had fallen amongst the dead, and lain insensible, till the fury of the conflict had subsided. It was near the close of the evening of that memorable day, which placed the family of Tudor on the throne of England, that he was recalled to life, by the benevolent aid of a priest, who sought, amidst that dreary scene, to afford the last consolations of religion to the dying, or to rescue the wounded from an untimely grave.

For more than a month he remained sick and feeble, in this good man's humble dwelling, and the end of September had already arrived, ere, enfeebled by long sickness, and the contents of his purse diminished to a single gold piece, he passed the open fields of St. Giles's, and entered the precincts of Westminster on foot.

He knew that the residence of Sir Gilbert Talbot was in the Strand, but when he found his way thither, and anxious to resume his place in the knight's service, presumed to enter the mansion, his disappointment was great, to find, that his late commander was absent in a distant country, with his troops, where his services were necessary to maintain the public tranquillity.

It was in vain that Hubert claimed hospitality, as one of Sir Gilbert's guard, in the battle of Bosworth ; the saucy porter, who detested the very name of a soldier, desired him to seek his fortune elsewhere, with all such greedy adventurers, and shut the door in his face.

No other alternative remained for him in the great city, but to take shelter for the night, in one of the numerous hostelries, and to endeavour, on the morrow, to discover some of the companions of his short campaign, from whom to take counsel.

His courage and his strength revived by

repose, he made a slight repast, and sallied forth, soon after sunrise, into the wilderness of the great city. At first he eagerly scrutinized the face of every one he met, in the hope of discovering some of his former comrades, and with the yet more wild expectation of meeting either Conyers or Marion amidst the busy throng. But all passed him by unknown, like waves that were hurrying to be lost in some great ocean, unconscious of the grave that awaited them at the end of their brief course.

Sometimes, impelled by curiosity, and hoping he knew not what, he hurried on likewise with the mass, at other moments, wearied and disappointed, and struck with despair by the perception of his own insignificance in this vast tide of life, he stood apart under some open gateway, gazing unconsciously on the passing multitude, whilst his thoughts were far away in the fields of his youth, where the fair companion of his boyish days appeared the only partner of his solitude. It was a fearful contrast to his

present position, and strong-hearted and courageous as he had ever hitherto been, against the attacks of fortune, it was with difficulty he restrained the tears that arose to his eyes, when he remembered the bright hopes, and the affectionate friends of those young years, and compared them with his present desolation and solitude. His ignorance as to the fate of Ellen and Marion, his knowledge that Lady Isabel was in Carlton's power, and his long separation from Conyers, all contributed to fill his mind with anxiety ; and had he possessed the means, he would instantly have quitted London, and hurried to the assistance of his early and beloved protectress.

Occupied by such thoughts, he had wandered on, unconscious whither he went, until, ascending Ludgate Hill, he arrived in front of the old Gothic Church of Saint Paul.

It was a day of festival, and the bells were ringing merrily from the towers, summoning the motley crowd that filled all the

surrounding streets, to participate in the blessings of prayer and thanksgiving, within the sacred walls.

A procession of Dominican monks, in the white serge dress of their order, passed him, chanting till they reached the porch of the church ; then followed numerous men and boys, in linen surplices, bearing a crucifix and banners before the bishop, who, surrounded by priests carrying lighted tapers, in full and gorgeous canonicals, with a gold, brocaded canopy borne above his head, and his train supported by six pages, in white silk gowns, walked towards the church, followed by a long train of clergy, splendidly attired in the respective garments of their orders and professions.

Flowers were scattered on the path he trod, and draperies festooned the houses as far as the eye could reach. But though every one bent the knee as this dignitary of the church passed along, a new and more exciting object of interest engrossed the attention of the public, even before the sacred

procession had disappeared within the gates of the church.

The voices of the choristers had scarcely died away, when the sound of trumpets ascending from Ludgate Hill, mingled with the peal of the bells. Military banners were visible above the heads of the people, and the crowd pressing back on every side gave place to a troop of yeomen in the royal livery, who rode slowly through the mass.

Loud hurrahs rent the air, handkerchiefs were waved from the windows, and flowers fell in showers from the hands of the women, who, everywhere, gazed eagerly from the houses.

Where Hubert stood, on the steps of the south door of the cathedral, he could see nothing of the procession which excited this joyous tumult, but the loud shouts which rent the air, of “long live the Princess Elizabeth,” soon informed him of its cause. After vainly attempting to

obtain a sight of her royal highness ere she entered the church, he followed the crowd that poured, like a torrent, into the building, and found himself near the centre of the nave, almost at the same moment that Elizabeth and her attendants were conducted, between two lines of guards, by the priests of the cathedral, to the places prepared for them in the choir.

For a moment he gazed, with the respectful admiration and love of a devoted subject, on the princess. Tall, fair, and slender, she had scarcely reached her nineteenth year. Yet there was an expression of sadness and resignation on her young face, that ill accorded with her years. It recalled to all who beheld her, the murder of her young brothers, and her recent persecution by her uncle Richard, and the people loved her the more, for this evidence of her early trials—loved her—till her promised husband, Henry the Seventh, was jealous of that love, and after he made her his wife, he retarded to

the utmost, the ceremony of her coronation, lest it might appear, that he had won his crown as the inheritance of this daughter and heiress of royalty.

But though Hubert, like all who beheld her, felt deeply interested in her fate, his eyes no sooner fell on the second lady, who walked in her train, than he forgot the fortunes of the houses of York and Lancaster, and all things past and present, save Ellen Collingwood.

The solemnity of the time and place alone prevented him rushing forward and casting himself at once at her feet.

She was attired in deep mourning, and as she passed along amidst that gorgeous throng, with her eyes cast down, and her arms crossed on her breast, Hubert thought he had never before beheld her so beautiful. Vainly he endeavoured to attract her attention ; vainly he hoped that her eyes might be, for one moment, turned to meet his ardent glance. She passed on, pure as an angel, occupied alone by pure and holy

thoughts, alike unconscious of the admiration that attended her footsteps, and of the presence of him, for whom her prayers were offered up.

Hubert could scarcely obtain a glimpse of her face during the service, but that glimpse sufficed to chain him to the spot, and to renew in his heart all the ardent hopes he had so long and fondly cherished. His poverty—his difficulties—the mystery of his birth, were alike forgotten ; for once the ceremony of the mass brought no thoughts of devotion to his mind, and when all was concluded, and a loud burst of music, and a movement amidst the guards, announced the princess was about to depart, he felt that the whole scene had passed like the vision of a minute ; a momentary gleam of happiness, that left no trace behind.

Again Ellen passed within a few paces before him ; but equally unconscious of his proximity ; and his joy changing suddenly to a wild impatience, bordering on despair, he forced his way amongst the very first of

those who followed the procession to the great door of the church.

The princess was already on her horse when he regained the open air, and whilst her esquires held back her impatient steed, she bowed repeatedly in answer to the acclamations of the crowd.

Ellen, led by one of the noblemen of the court, had reached the bottom of the great steps, and in another moment, by the assistance of her gallant conductor, sprang lightly on the milk white palfrey that awaited her ; but, as if shrinking from the public gaze, she had drawn her veil so closely around her, that even her lover could catch no glimpse of her features.

The nobleman who had placed her on the saddle, became an object of envy to Hubert, and when he suddenly turned to mount his charger, he saw with amazement, in the splendid garments of court ceremony, the form and features of the young shepherd. Thomas, whom he had saved from the pur-

suit of Lord Northumberland's men, and conducted to Newcastle.

With a short exclamation of surprise, he demanded of a citizen near the name of the courtier.

"It is Lord Clifford," he replied, "whose father slew the Duke of Rutland, the brother of King Richard. He is now restored to his lands and titles, and, as the world says, the affianced husband of Mistress Ellen Collingwood, the rich heiress he has just placed on her horse."

"Her affianced husband! impossible!" cried Hubert wildly.

The stranger laughed and stared at him, without making any reply. The trumpets blew loud and shrill—the procession moved on, and Hubert, forgetting everything but his love, made a violent attempt to force his way between two guards, who, ranged in close line, kept back the people, so as to form a passage for the princess. But, his strong efforts, and his entreaties to pass, were

equally in vain. With crossed halberds, the men prevented his passage, till the last of the pageant arrived near Ludgate Hill, and the dense crowd, then rendered it utterly impossible for him even to obtain another view of Ellen, till her royal mistress arrived at Baynard's Castle in Thames Street, where she then resided with her mother.

Thither, nevertheless, with a beating heart he pursued them, though only to expose himself to renewed disappointment and insult. Once more the guards interrupted his progress, and, with rude words, refused him admission into the great court of the palace. Too well aware of the inutility of expostulation, he turned away with a heavy heart, for he felt, with bitter mortification, that between the poor soldier of fortune, and Ellen Collingwood, the favorite and Ward of the Crown, there existed an insuperable barrier.

His throat swelled nearly to suffocation—the movement of his heart seemed sus-

pended—but, after the first moments of mental combat, instead of sinking under this new sense of humiliation, his soul resumed its vigour, and sustained by a sense of honor, and honest worth, he resolved for the future, to meet all the changes of his wayward destiny, with undaunted courage, and to place his trust, to the last moment of his existence, in the mercy of Heaven.

Tranquillised by such thoughts, he turned away from the palace, and renewed his solitary ramble through the city.

Whilst reposing under the trees that overhung the Thames near the Temple, the remembrance of the priest, whose letters to the miller, showed so deep an interest in his fate, once more recurred to his mind, and, drawing forth the scraps of paper he had always carried about his person since he received them from Marion, he, once more, anxiously perused them.

To endeavour to discover the author, was, he felt, the first step he ought to take ; and, remembering that the fair outlaw

had suspected them to be written by Sir Christopher Urswick, the confessor of the Countess of Richmond, he resolved on the morrow, to seek an interview with the churchman.

It was with better hopes, that he put this design into execution ; but, again he was destined to be disappointed. The porter at the gate, informed him that Sir Christopher Urswick, had been recently sent by his majesty, with Oliver King, Archdeacon of York, to Paris, to repay, to Charles the Eighth, the sums he had advanced for the maintenance of his fleet and army of invasion, as well as to prolong the treaty existing between them ; and, that he was not expected to return to England, before the end of the year.

“ If you have any affair of importance to communicate to him,” added the domestic, when he remarked the downcast air with which he received this intelligence ; “ you had better go to Master Jacob Andrews, the jeweller, in Mincing

Lane ; whom men say, is even more in his confidence, than my Lady Countess, herself."

"But, how shall I know his dwelling?" demanded Hubert, eagerly.

"By the three balls above his door, which proclaim his calling as a broker," returned the porter. "He is always to be found before noon ; and, if you have any real business with my lady's confessor, you have only to pronounce the name of Urswick to Master Andrews, and he will give you a hearing without delay."

Hubert thanked him ; but, though he turned to pursue the course the friendly domestic had pointed out to him, he had no expectation that his visit to the jeweller, would lead to any favourable result. The farther he proceeded, the more strongly he felt, that the idea he entertained that Father Urswick was acquainted with the secret of his birth, was an insufficient excuse for intruding on the presence of a stranger. There

was not a cypher attached to the scraps of writing found by Marion ; even she had declared, that though she had seen many letters from the priest, she could not, positively assert, that these papers were written by him ; and, though combined with Urswick's intimacy with Conyers, they might have justified his seeking a personal explanation from the confessor ; they were, he felt, not sufficient to warrant his requesting the jeweller to write to him on his account.

Yet, when he remembered, that two months might probably elapse, ere Urswick's return to England, and, that he hardly retained sufficient money to pay for another night's lodging, he felt that something must be done, not only for the future, but to provide for the necessities of the present moment.

"I cannot beg," he thought, "and, to work I am not ashamed ; perhaps, as this jeweller has acquaintance amongst the clergy—he may, be able to recommend me to

copy manuscripts ; or, at all hazards, as he is likewise a broker, he may be willing to lend me money on the old gold cross I have worn from infancy. Its price may keep me, till I can find means to earn an honest livelihood ; and, if it be the will of heaven, that I remain a workman, or a common soldier all my life, I will strive to be content—I will regard Ellen from my lowly poverty, like a bright star that has been revealed to me, to elevate my soul, by its pure influence, above the debasing effects of earth and its necessities. I will forget hope, and love her as a spirit, which heaven hath sent to guide me, through life's temptations, to eternal peace."

Engaged by such reflections, the young soldier was advancing with rapid steps near the end of Mincing-lane, when his progress was impeded by a party of horsemen, that rode from a narrow gateway at a short distance before him. There was a dense fog, and as he heard their approaching footsteps ere their figures were visible, he drew back

near the corner of the street to allow them to pass.

The first person distinctly visible to him, as they drew near, was the secretary, Master Carlton. His start of surprise as their eyes met, convinced him that he, likewise, was recognised. A moment afterwards, he heard Carlton call upon his attendants to halt, but Hubert immediately sprang forward, and, concealed by the fog, had made one or two turnings ere the secretary had time to explain his wishes to his nearest attendant.

CHAPTER III.

OWING to the darkness of the day, some time elapsed ere the young soldier discovered the three balls mentioned by the porter, and when he did so, he could scarcely believe, from the appearance of the house before which they dangled, that the owner of so miserable a dwelling could be a trader in gems and precious metals. All the wooden houses around were more or less adorned with paint, according to the taste of their owners,

whilst the rich goods exposed in their open shops, gave them a cheerful appearance, utterly different from the abode of Master Andrews. The doors and windows were there carefully closed, the accumulated dust and cobwebs on the carved woodwork, rendered all of one dingy hue, and no sign of life was visible from the cellar to the garret.

Nevertheless, the name of Jacob Andrews, in dirty white letters on the door, left Hubert no doubt that the money-lending jeweller dwelt therein, and gave him courage to knock for admission.

Scarcely three minutes elapsed, ere he heard a rustling within, and the door was then cautiously unclosed about half a foot, by a thin, diminutive old woman, who, in a tremulous voice, demanded his business.

“I want to speak with Master Andrews,” he returned.

“If you have brought pledges,” she said, “my master sees no one on that kind of business, till after noon-day, so you must call again.”

"But if I come on other matters, what then?" demanded the young man.

"What then? why perhaps then he won't see you at all!" said the crone. "It all depends upon what your business may be."

"But suppose I have something to say to him about Sir Christopher Urswick!" inquired Hubert, slipping the last coin he possessed into her hand.

"Why, then he will see you without a moment's delay," she returned, with a grim smile, as she pocketted her unexpected present. "If the king himself were in the lobby, he must wait till the Confessor's affairs were settled. Follow me."

Hubert, though he perceived that she had put a false interpretation on his words, did not think it necessary at that moment to make further explanations, and quietly obeyed her, when having secured the door, she repeated her order, and led the way with tottering steps up a flight of stairs leading to an upper story.

All was dirty and desolate within the

dwelling, as without, though so little light was admitted through the half closed shutters, that Hubert could scarcely distinguish more than the dingy outline of the objects around him, when he was left alone for a short time, on the first landing of the stairs, by his ancient conductress.

For a few minutes, he heard a low murmuring of voices, after which the housekeeper again appeared, and told him her master was ready to receive him. He then entered the chamber she had left, and the door was closed behind him.

Great was his astonishment to find himself thus suddenly introduced into a scene, totally different from all he had expected to find in such a place.

The room he entered, was large and low, and though not richly furnished, was clean and orderly, whilst a capital fire burnt in the glowing chimney, and a huge round of salted beef, and a tankard of foaming ale, and a loaf of bread occupied a small table in

front of it, spread with a clean white linen cloth and pewter plates as bright as silver.

Engaged with this substantial morning repast, sat a broad, red faced, merry looking man about sixty, whom Hubert rightly conjectured to be Master Andrews, the jeweller. He wore a brown doublet and hose of simple fashion, but his linen was fine, and scrupulously clean. His person, though thick and corpulent, was neither enfeebled, nor rendered unwieldly by age, and though the few hairs that were scattered over his high forehead were white as silver, his quick, grey eyes were bright, intelligent, and full of vivacity.

“So, young master,” he said, setting down the tankard, as his visiter approached him, from which he had taken an ample draught, “I understand you come with news from my good friend, Sir Christopher Urswick—that poor orator and beadsman, as he signs himself, who has done more to place the King upon his throne, than all the Barons of

England, with the King of France and the Duke of Brittany into the bargain."

"Pardon me," said Hubert, after respectfully saluting him, "but your servant has mistaken my words. I have not even the honor of being acquainted with the confessor of the Countess of Richmond."

"Then how, in the name of the saints, have you presumed to introduce yourself here, to interrupt my studies and calculations, and to disturb the progress of my digestion before I have finished my morning meal," cried the citizen, in a voice of pretended anger, which the merry twinkling of his eyes more than half belied. "I lend no man a sixpence, even on the security of a crown before noon, for, thank heaven, I have no necessity to spoil my appetite by earning my dinner; and I have resolved, and kept my resolution for the last ten years, to eat, drink, and be merry in spite of king, lords, and commons."

"And believe me, Master Andrews," said Hubert, with a pleasant smile, that greatly

mollified his host, "I should be sorry indeed, either to spoil your appetite, or diminish your mirth, and am not likely to trouble your digestion."

"Let me hear your business in as few words as possible, and I shall be the best judge of that," answered the jeweller.

"I am an orphan," returned the young man, simply. "Circumstances have induced me to believe that Sir Christopher Urswick is alone acquainted with the secret of my birth, and having been informed of your intimacy with this holy man, necessity induced me to apply to you to remit a letter to him with the least possible delay."

"And who told you I was a post-man?" demanded the citizen, abruptly. "And who, and what are you, I should like to know, that you dare presume that I am to be ready at your bidding, to assist you to bother the King's almoner, a man who has the affairs both of heaven and earth on his hands, about your birth, parentage, and education? I am no milk-sop, to be gulled by a palavering

story about mysteries and such nonsense, and if you expect anything from me, I must first know whom I am talking to."

"My name is Hubert Saville," he replied, with a manner more cold, and proud than before. "I am well known to Lady Isabel Collingwood and to Marston Conyers, who has long been the correspondent and agent of Sir Christopher Urswick in the north of England."

"Humph! Conyers, who stands fifth on the list of proclaimed traitors!"

"Impossible! from his childhood he has been one of the most zealous partisans of the house of Lancaster, and he joined Lord Stanley with five hundred men, to fight for Henry the Seventh."

"Ask Master Carlton," returned Andrews, drily. "Ask the Queen Dowager, whose father's head, it seems, he helped to the block. They will tell you, there is not a blacker traitor in all England—and who shall dispute their word?"

“Sir Christopher Urswick knows such a charge to be false,” cried Hubert, vehemently.

“Sir Christopher knows many things that Master Carlton would not like to hear ; but he is in France, and what is to be done ?”

“And must an honest man be hanged, because his friends are absent on the King’s service ?” cried Hubert, eagerly. “It is injustice—flagrant injustice, and poor and friendless though I be, I will force my way to the feet of the King—I will prove to him that the whole accusation is the invention of a hypocritical scoundrel, and I will save an honest man, though I die for it.”

“And you imagine, that his Majesty will listen to you, a poor, pennyless varlet, whom nobody knows, in preference to the rich secretary of the late King, whose convenient evidence will put a hundred valuable confiscations into the royal treasury, before the year is at an end ?”

“The King cannot refuse to listen to me,” replied Hubert, forgetting for a minute the

promise he had given to the Earl of Richmond.

“ Cannot refuse ? ” echoed the jeweller, “ this is strong language, and as, no doubt, you would not use it without reason, I marvel you have not made use of your favor or your power, I presume I should say, with his Majesty, to better your own condition.”

“ Perhaps I have spoken too warmly,” answered the young man, remembering his imprudence, “ but allow me to say, that in spite of the favor which Master Carlton is said to enjoy—in spite of the pardon, his falsehood to others has gained for his own political offences, if by the means of Marston Conyers and his friends, this arch hypocrite could be convicted of the murder of Sir Hugh Collingwood, and his lands forfeited to the Crown, I have little doubt the King would listen to the man who offered to rid him, on such good terms, of the tool, of which he has already made a sufficient use.”

“ Ha, ha, my young gentleman, you are more of a politician than I took you for,” said the citizen, regarding Hubert with an expression

of approbation, “and I will tell you frankly, that if you can really bring Master Carlton to the scaffold, instead of Marston Conyers, you will merit the applause of all honest men ; and perchance, if you know where the outlaw is to be found, you can give him a hint to be on his guard—for since the battle of Bosworth, I can obtain no trace of him.”

“ Did I know where to find him, I should not have troubled you with this visit,” was the reply, “ for I could have learned all from him which I have now demanded.”

“ And did Conyers lead you to suppose that Sir Christopher Urswick is acquainted with your history ?” demanded Andrews, after regarding his visiter for some time in silence, as if endeavouring to recal, by the form before him, some long forgotten image to his mind.

“ These papers have given rise to this idea,” answered Hubert, drawing forth from his bosom the scraps found in the miller’s hovel, and laying them before the citizen. “ The hand is disguised, but one who knows

the holy father well, has led me to believe that the writing is his. Doubtless, Master Andrews, you are fully competent to decide on this point, but I am certain, that by whomsoever the letters are written, they relate only to myself, and such being my conviction, I consider it my duty to use every means in my power to discover the full meaning of their mysterious language."

" You are a resolute fellow," said Andrews, coolly, as he pushed away the dish from before him ; and putting his spectacles on his nose, he proceeded to peruse the papers which Hubert regarded of so much importance.

Twice he read them over, from beginning to end, ere he demanded how these fragments had fallen into the young man's possession.

" They were found in the house of the person to whom they are addressed, after his death," was the reply.

" And who may have been that person ?" inquired his host.

" An old Lancastrian soldier, who was

once a servant of Sir Reginald Collingwood's, and was killed in defending the house of Lady Isabel Collingwood, against a nocturnal attack."

"And you imagine he was in correspondence with Father Urswick?"

"All his letters to Conyers, and they were many, passed through this old man's hands," was Hubert's reply.

"Young man," returned the jeweller, gravely, "I will confess to you, I am greatly inclined to believe your story, well knowing, that during the civil wars, Sir Christopher Urswick was confessor to Lord Selwyn's family, whose daughter married Reginald, the eldest son of Sir Ralph Collingwood. But to prove that you are the child of this marriage, and to wring from Master Carlton possession of the male Fief of the Collingwoods, will require much stronger evidence than these scraps of paper, more especially as it falls to the Crown in default of heirs male, should Master Carlton die without children."

"I have been educated as the son of Sir Hugh Collingwood, by the Vicar of Bellinghem, of whom this letter speaks," returned Hubert. "He can swear that he received me from the knight's arms. It remains to be proved, if Sir Christopher had given a child to the care of Sir Hugh, and if he remembers this cross," and he drew a gold crucifix, set with precious stones, from his bosom. "I have worn it from infancy."

The jeweller took it in one hand, whilst he held his spectacles on his nose, and examined the trinket, with the closest attention.

"I was told you purchased, as well as sold jewels—" said Hubert, in a hesitating voice, whilst his host was thus engaged.

"And likewise lend money on good security," said the citizen, as if to finish his broken sentence.

"And I trust you will consider the jewels in that cross, sufficient security for eight royals, till those friends return to London,

from whom I can expect employment," rejoined the young man, blushing deeply.

"Humph! friends, say you?" was the caustic reply. "Conyers, perhaps, who is probably on the point of being hanged, or Lady Isabel Collingwood, whom the world says is stark mad! But methinks a handsome fellow like you, who, even as Sir Hugh's son, has some claims on the family charity, would do better to apply to his fair daughter, Mistress Ellen, who is high in favor with the future Queen, and is not only rich herself, but the affianced bride of the young Lord Clifford, to whom his father's lands have been restored by the King."

"So I have already heard, but believed it impossible to be true!" answered Hubert, unable to suppress the emotion this information excited in his breast.

"And wherefore impossible?" demanded the citizen, regarding his visiter with increased curiosity. "His Majesty, anxious to compensate the young nobleman for the loss of his father, and the long years he has

passed in seclusion and poverty, has promised him the hand of the richest “Ward of the Crown.”

“And Ellen accepts him!” exclaimed Hubert.

“She is a fool if she does not,” answered the money-lender. “But I have no idea that the lady will make any objection to a young, rich, and handsome suitor, who is favored by the King. There is many a girl glad to be contented with an old fellow under such circumstances. But, by the blessed Virgin, you seem marvellously disturbed by my intelligence. You know the young lady, I am to presume?”

“Lady Isabel has supplied the place of a mother to us both.”

“And you have been brought up together, like brother and sister?”

“Till recently, we knew not of our consanguinity, nor will Ellen now believe it,” answered the youth.

“Ha! it appears strange to me,” resumed Andrews, after a brief pause; “that Lady

Isabel should allow a youth, in whom, you wish to persuade me, she took an almost maternal interest, to depart and seek his fortune, without letters, or recommendations to her old, and long tried friends."

"I was furnished with many such," said Hubert; "they were concealed in a hollow staff, which, unfortunately, I lost in a night skirmish with Carlton's soldiers, in the monastery of the Black Friars, at Newcastle."

"And you know not more exactly, the contents of this precious staff?"

"Marston Conyers desired me not to open it, till I reached York."

"Should you recognise it, were it placed before you?"

"Without a doubt."

The citizen made no reply, but arising from his seat, he proceeded to an inner room, whence, after a minute's delay, he returned with three short staffs in his hand, and holding them towards Hubert, he demanded

if either of them resembled that he had lost.

“By all that is wonderful, Master Andrews, how has this come into your possession!” exclaimed Hubert, with amazement, as he took the lost gift of Conyers, from the hands of the citizen.

“Well done, my brave fellow,” cried Andrews, flinging away the other staffs, and rubbing his hands with delight, “I can, now, believe every word of your history; and, let me tell you, I have been searching for you, ever since the king’s arrival in London.”

“For me!” exclaimed his listener, every moment more and more surprised.

“Yes, as true as my name is Andrews. That staff was found in the monastery, the morning after your departure from Newcastle, and the abbot lost no time in forwarding it to me—for, I must tell you, besides letters of recommendation for you, it contained important communications for me, from

Sir Christopher Urswick, concerning a loan, I was secretly employed to negotiate for the Earl of Richmond, with the City of London. He told me, at the same time, the gallant service you had done at Newcastle, informed me you were gone to carry arms under Sir Gilbert Talbot's banner, and requested me to watch over your fortunes, as soon as you arrived in London. To this hour, I have been unable to gain any tidings of you, except, that your fellow soldiers believed you were slain in the Battle of Bosworth."

"This is, indeed, marvellous," returned the young man, "and is a lesson, that in the hour of deepest adversity, we should never despair of the protection of Heaven."

"Misfortune is but a means to try the temper of our metal," said his host, "and, now, I am certain of yours, you must put away all the thoughts of despair, and adversity, and that sort of stuff, for, both on Lady Isabel's and the abbot's account, it is my duty to help you forward to the utmost of my

power, to say nothing of Father Urswick, who, from all you have told me, I shrewdly suspect, knows more about you, than either the one or the other."

"And, do you, then, believe those papers to be in his hand-writing?"

"Most certainly I do—and, as I am making up a packet for him, with some little private details about court affairs, to go to France to-morrow, by the king's courier, I will lose no time in demanding an explanation. But, what was that you said, about Carlton being the murderer of Sir Hugh Collingwood? I can scarcely believe you have sufficient authority for such an assertion as that—for, had he been a shade less black than he is, he would have succeeded in winning Mistress Ellen Collingwood for his bride, in defiance of poor Lord Clifford, who loves her to distraction."

"Conyers can bring forth a witness of the fact," replied Hubert. "Even Carlton's dagger, is in this person's possession."

“ But where is Conyers to be found ? ”

“ I can give no tidings of him. But, I marvel, Mistress Ellen has taken no steps to avenge her father’s murder. She knows as much as I do.”

“ Poor lady, she is little better than a prisoner,” answered the jeweller, “ and, probably, has no friend near her, to procure the necessary evidence. I have heard, she only consents to marry Lord Clifford, to escape from Carlton’s addresses, of which, she openly declared her detestation and horror. Had I a daughter, I would rather leave her to earn her bread as a kitchen wench, than to be a victim, an object of plunder, to every avaricious rascal, under the name of a *Ward of the Crown*. An old jeweller like me, may say, with certainty, it is not all gold that glitters, Master Saville. There is the Princess Elizabeth, too ; she is fair, and young, and gentle, and must be made a queen for the good of the nation ; but, if the king cares a straw for her, I’ll be melted before one of my

own blow pipes. He can hardly, even be decently civil to her in public, for he hates the very name of York. But, so much the better for all true Lancastrians. But we must think of our own affairs ! You want money, you say. That is the first thing necessary in this great city ! eh ! where a beggar and a rascal are considered much on an equality."

" I should be obliged by the loan of eight royals, on this cross," said the youth, " I am, in truth, unwilling to sell it."

" Bah ! bah ! bah ! loan indeed ! security ! I scorn your security !" cried the citizen, with a loud laugh. " Has not the brother of the Bishop of Ely, recommended you to my care ! Keep your cross, and take the money, or double the sum ; and, do not forget when you want more, that I am your banker —and, have been the banker of Lady Isabel Collingwood, for more than four and twenty years. You may, I hope, be able to pay me, sooner than you expect."

“ Such generosity overpowers me,” Hubert began, when the citizen put a purse of gold into his hands ; but, the vehement exclamations of his host, rendered his concluding words inaudible.

“ No thanks ! no thanks !” cried the old man, “ I detest them more than false stones in gilt setting. Tell me, only where you are to be found, and, if there is any other way, in which you have immediate need of my services !”

“ Oh ! Master Andrews, there is, indeed, one thing I most earnestly desire,” returned Saville with hesitation. “ It may not be in your power, or you may not be willing to assist me—but, an interview with Mistress Ellen Collingwood, would be to me, more precious, than all the gems in the king’s crown.”

“ Ha ! ha ! sits the wind in that direction ?” cried the jeweller, slowly bowing his head, as if, internally, satisfied with his own sagacity. “ And how, in the name of fortune, do you think that an old, fat, citizen like me, has

the power to open the chamber doors of the princess's gentlewomen, to bold, young gallants like you?"

"Pardon me, if I have presumed too far; but, it seemed to me, you were possessed of many threads to guide you through the labyrinth of the court."

"And of golden keys, to open where I please," returned the old man, with a chuckling laugh. "Well, well, you are not far wrong, perhaps; and, as I have every reason, from all I have heard, to place confidence in you, I believe I can help you in this matter. I am engaged this very afternoon, to go to Baynard's Castle, with jewels for the Princess's approbation; and, as there are a number of heavy packages, you may help me to carry them—and, when once in her highness's apartments, you must make the best of the opportunity for speaking to Mistress Ellen."

"I know not how to thank you—the device is admirable," cried Hubert, eagerly.

"Perhaps, I am an old fool for my pains," answered the jeweller, "though, to be sure,

if the girl be your sister, there is no harm done—and, if not, you best know what you have to say to her. You have saved her once, it appears, and, in truth, she looked so sad in the church yesterday—it seems, she hath need of your help a second time. She will be glad to see an old friend, at all events—for they are rare articles at court. But you cannot play the part of an apprentice in that soldier's jerkin. You must strip off your martial feathers, and be contented for once, to wear the brown doublet and hose, of one of my workmen."

"I am ready to do all you think expedient," was Hubert's reply,

"Then, I will summon my foreman, and tell him to furnish you with all things necessary for your disguise, whilst I arrange the jewels we must carry with us, to the palace. There is no time to be lost."

So saying, Master Andrews rung a small bell on the table, which speedily brought a trusty servitor — very little

younger than himself — from an inner chamber. This worthy fellow, having, in silence, received his master's instructions, conducted Hubert to his own neat apartment, on the upper story, where the young man's change of attire was speedily effected.

CHAPTER IV.

THE hour of dinner, in 1485, was eleven o'clock. It passed in solemn silence, on the first of October, in Baynard's Castle. The queen, in gloomy mood, withdrew as quickly as possible, after its conclusion, to her own apartments—the different members of her family followed, to re-commence their embroidery in her cheerless saloon, and all was as still in the old building, as in a religious dwelling. But under this appearance of

tranquillity, the hearts of several of its inhabitants were ill ease.

The Queen Dowager herself was far from satisfied with her position. Although her eldest daughter was about to mount the throne of England, she was well aware, that by her weak compliance with the insidious propositions of Richard the Third, and her treacherous conduct towards the Earl of Richmond after she had professed to embrace his cause, she had entirely lost all place in his esteem, and the cold contempt with which he had already treated her, even before he was firmly seated on the throne, made her look forward to the future with apprehension ; a dark presentiment even then haunted her mind, which was, ere long, cruelly accomplished, when stripped, by her suspicious son-in-law, of all her possessions, she died neglected and forgotten in the seclusion of a nunnery.

Nor, though a crown hung suspended above her daughter's brow, was Elizabeth more happy. Timid and reserved, though

of strong affections and generous heart, the misfortunes of her family had given a tinge of melancholy to her character. Her young brothers had been snatched from her in their fair childhood, and she had been exposed to the most cruel persecution, because she refused to wed the uncle who had murdered them ; yet now, when her lot was apparently fair and bright, she was scarcely less sad than in her gloomy prison of Sheriffhuten, as she sat that day in her withdrawing-room with no other companion than Mistress Ellen Collingwood.

It was a sombre, old, wainscotted chamber, strewed with green rushes ; even the fire burnt dull and sluggishly, and the sunbeams were robbed of their cheering radiance, as they fell through the painted glass of the narrow painted window. Above the heavy stone carved chimney hung a portrait of Edward the Fourth, painted in the quaint fashion of the time, but still bearing evidence of the personal beauty, for which he had been celebrated.

Immediately opposite sat his daughter, gazing with tearful eyes on the portrait of a father, whose tender love she had requited with all the ardour of a young and affectionate heart. Her fair face, though not handsome, was animated by an expression the most touching, and as the sunbeams fell upon her pure white garments, and shed a halo of many coloured hues from the painted glass above, around her golden hair, there was a charm in her young and graceful figure, such as is frequently wanting in beauty the most regular.

Close at her feet, and clothed in black, sat Ellen Collingwood on a low stool, gazing with as much tenderness on the agitated features of her mistress, as she upon the picture. She too, it was evident, was not without her portion of care. The roses had forsaken her cheeks, the light of joy no longer glittered in her eyes, and an expression of the deepest sadness, had replaced the cheerful smile that formerly animated her countenance.

"We have both lost a father's protection, at the moment when we most needed it," said the princess, at length breaking silence, and taking her companion's hand in hers, with a deep sigh. "I fear, my poor Ellen, there will be little joy for us, until we meet their departed spirits in Paradise."

"I pray, your highness, put away this sadness," said Ellen, kissing, with tender respect, the hand she held. "When you first honoured me with your confidence, it is true you had deep cause for sorrow and anxiety—but now—the night and the clouds have passed, and the sun of a bright day has arisen, that will diffuse joy henceforth and for ever over your path."

"Others may think so, who see only the glittering surface," returned Elizabeth, whilst her eyes filled with tears, "but you, who have looked deeper—you, who have been a witness of the events of the last month, you know, there is little chance that my happiness will be assured by a crown. Alas, it were better to be born a milk-maid, and

free to wed where the heart loves, than a princess—a creature no better than a slave—a puppet—who is sold as state policy directs, without, for a moment, consulting either her feelings, or those of the man who is compelled, by ambition or interest, to make her his wife."

"But the king is young and virtuous, his person is noble, and his humour gentle, as all men say." replied Ellen with ardour, "when you know him better, your highness must needs be happy with such a man."

"I know him better than you imagine, Ellen," answered Elizabeth sadly. "He is cold, very cold ! his calculating heart is incapable of love. He promised to marry me, as a means to mount the throne—and now, when he is seated there, could he, without the loss of honour, escape from the engagement, he would wed me with pleasure, to some petty baron, and let the people of England see, he does not owe his crown to one of the daughters of detested York.

Yes—I feel in every word he utters, that he hates me, and my family, with that cold hatred, that can know no change. And yet I am condemned to call this man my husband—to be a faithful and obedient partner to one, whose every word and look inflicts a bitter wound on this poor heart, in which all hope of sympathy, of joy, or love upon earth, is now for ever blighted.

“Your highness has mistaken his character,” said Ellen, timidly. “He is reserved—perhaps proud, but warm feelings may glow beneath the calm exterior of his placid manner. The world speaks his conduct irreproachable, and praises his piety.”

“But says nothing of his heart,” answered her mistress bitterly. “The world knows he is too fond of money, to love aught else upon earth! Moreover he is jealous of my favour with the people.”

“Your highness is too severe—unjust—” said Ellen in broken accents.

“Nay, nay, I beseech you, reproach me

not, that I speak to you thus plainly ! my heart hath need of it," cried Elizabeth, with unusual ardour. " To my mother I dare not betray my feelings, and you must hear, and bear with me. I must cast the burthen from my soul, ere the marriage vows, have bound me to eternal silence—for once married, Ellen, I must suffer—and suffer—and suffer—and die without complaint. Answer me not—contradict me not ; there is no consolation for me, but these tears, for I know it is my destiny to wed a man against his will, whose sordid nature I despise from the very depth of my soul. It is fearful—it is appalling ! yet there is no escape but in the grave ; and all the dreams of joy, which, even amidst calamity, the young heart delights to form, are destroyed for me. Ah, Ellen, had my father lived, it had not come to this !" and the princess flung her arms round the neck of her attendant, and hiding her face upon her shoulder, wept violently.

Ellen strove not to comfort her ; she felt that her fears were too just, her affliction too deep for words, and she gave no interruption to this burst of sorrow, save by gently pressing, from time to time, the hand she held in hers, in token of sympathy.

Nearly a quarter of an hour had thus passed, when the silence was interrupted by a slight tap at the door, behind the tapestry that covered an alcove.

“ By all that is holy, I trust it is not the king ! ” exclaimed Elizabeth, suddenly starting up, and clasping her hands with a look of unutterable consternation. “ I cannot receive him in this state ! Ellen, Ellen, if you love me, go and say I have retired to my chamber indisposed, but will quickly attend upon his pleasure,” and without waiting till the lady had ascertained the cause of the renewed knocking, she hastily rushed away through an opposite door.

Almost immediately afterwards, in answer to Ellen’s command, a waiting gentlewoman

entered the room, but instead of announcing the arrival of his Majesty, she informed her that Master Andrews, the jeweller, was waiting without, with jewels for the inspection of her highness.

"Show him in here," she returned, "and I will inform the princess of his presence."

Anxious to relieve the mind of her mistress from the apprehension of an immediate visit from his Majesty, Ellen lost no time in doing so, but finding the traces of her recent tears still too evident for Elizabeth to appear in the presence of a stranger, she promised to bring the jewels to her in her chamber, if, after a slight delay, she still felt unequal to an interview with the worthy citizen.

Ellen was received with many bows by Master Andrews when she re-entered the withdrawing-room, which having courteously returned, she took her seat at the table where he had spread his precious wares without having even lifted her eyes towards the spot, where Hubert, disguised as his apprentice,

stood watching her with an agitation, which almost deprived him of the power of thought. Ellen's back was towards him, and the first use he made of his recovered faculties, was to give a sign to Master Andrews to leave them together.

The merchant was bending, at the moment, to draw forth a case containing a diamond necklace from his sack, but not unmindful of his promises, he no sooner perceived the signal, than pretending he had left the packet he sought in an outer chamber, he abruptly departed without further excuse.

“Ellen! dearest Ellen!” exclaimed Hubert, starting at once to her side. “By all that is sacred, tell me, that whatever the world may say—you have not already forgotten me!”

“Hubert! can it be possible!” were the only words the astonished girl could pronounce, and in the wild tumult of her joy, at this unexpected apparition, she kissed

again and again the hand with which the soldier had clasped her slender fingers.

“My precious Ellen! and thou art still the same!” he murmured, whilst tears of pleasure filled his eyes. “All sorrow—all suffering is forgotten, in the ecstasy of a moment like this!” and he bent over her, and pressed her to his heart, as she leaned her head against his breast.

“My friend—my brother,” she said, at length gently pushing him from her, and gazing on the companion of her childhood with a countenance radiant with joy; “by what happy chance is it that we thus meet? you, whom I have mourned as dead—you, whom I have wept till my poor heart had no more tears to shed for lighter sorrows.”

“And yet you are engaged to wed another,” returned Hubert reproachfully.

“I am a Ward of the Crown, and it is the king’s pleasure,” was her sad reply. “I never had a friend on earth but thee, and thou wert gone, they said—lost in the grave for ever!”

“No, dearest, no,” he replied. “It is true I fell defending the Earl of Richmond, but, by the mercy of Heaven, I did not die, though I have wished it had been my destiny, since I beheld thee, my only treasure, the affianced bride of another ; and felt, that though I no longer believed myself your brother, my poverty and lowly fortunes, had placed a barrier between us, which even the ardour of my love, could never hope to surmount.”

“Since thou art living, we will hope all things, above all, if thy father was not my father!” exclaimed Ellen. “But quick—quick, Master Andréws will return—the princess herself may interrupt us. Tell me where thou dwellest—who are thy friends—and first of all how we may meet again in more security.”

“The jeweller will know where to find me ; he knows our secret, and in compliance with my urgent entreaties, brought me hither to-day, in the wild hope that we might meet. But this marriage—this marriage! it is that which

drives me mad. Once, when I thought you were my sister, I strove to conquer my love, but now, when I have discovered traces of my birth—when I have proof that I am not the son of Sir Hugh, and perhaps in a few brief weeks, may be able to lay successful claim to an honorable name and broad inheritance, I swear that I will die, rather than submit to behold you the wife of another, and much as kings may count on their authority, it is but as a wisp of straw, when exposed to the strength of outraged passion. Ellen, heaven knows when we may meet again ; our moments are precious—swear to me, whilst there is yet time, that my efforts to win you, are sanctioned by your favor—promise me, that happen what may, though you see me not, though you hear nought from me, you will steadily refuse to receive Lord Clifford as your husband, and amidst all the persecutions, all the trials to which you may be exposed, that you will never cease to remember that one zealous champion—one to whom you are more pre-

cious than his own soul, is labouring with all the ardour of a devoted heart, to save you from being made the sacrifice of avarice and ambition."

"Ah, Hubert, is it necessary that I should now repeat to thee, that my heart is thine—and thine, even unto death!" murmured Ellen, in soft accents.

"Pardon me, dearest," he replied, "but love is prone to jealous fears, and when I was made to feel my poverty and lowly state, by the most insulting humiliations, when I was pushed back by the lances of the guard, as I dared to approach you—when I was turned away, by the menials, from your door, with the most insulting epithets—when I saw you surrounded by the great and noble, and was taught so harshly to feel the abyss that lay between us;—pardon me, if I doubted for a time, even the constancy of your love."

"Doubt it no more, and I will forget your unjust suspicions," was the lady's soft reply. "But, Hubert, the moments are flying fast,

where shall we meet again, to discourse tranquilly on our future plans."

" Could I be sure of finding you once more thus alone ?" said Hubert, eagerly

" It is dangerous," she replied, " even to-day the King is expected every moment, and Carlton, who has adroitly changed his party, and has even acquired a certain favor at the Court, though he has failed to secure me for his wife, has from time to time the audacity to visit me as his relative, and your life would be in danger, should he find you here."

" And is Lady Isabel still in his power ? have you made no effort to bring him to justice, for your father's murder ?" eagerly demanded Hubert.

" Marion, the only witness of his crime, after being sent by the Abbot of the Blackfriars at Newcastle, with letters for the Princess Elizabeth, at Sheriffhuton, has unaccountably disappeared," replied Ellen, in hurried accents. " Conyers, sacrificed to the vengeance of the Queen Dowager, is on the

list of traitors, and more than all, Carlton has purchased, by the vilest services, the protection of his Majesty, whilst I have only the feeble support of his affianced wife."

"And Lord Clifford?"

"Is a young and inexperienced man, educated in the guise of a shepherd, and utterly helpless against the intrigues of a Court. My position, and my fears of Carlton, compelled me to receive his visits, but I have hitherto treated him only with the most distant courtesy, hoping to gain time, till, arrived at the age of twenty-one, I should be free to enter a convent, where, since I was informed of your death, I had resolved to spend the remainder of my life."

"I believe it will be most advisable, Ellen for you to acquaint Lord Clifford with our whole history," said Hubert, after a few moment's reflection. "I have a certain claim on his favor, for I once rendered him a signal service, which, I believe he is too generous lightly to forget."

The hasty entrance of the jeweller, here·

interrupted their discourse, and the dismay of the lovers was great, when he informed them, that the King had already entered the castle, and was ascending the great staircase to the apartments of the Princess.

"There is no way for you to depart without encountering his Majesty!" cried Ellen, in hurried accents. "You must remain here, and I trust that, as the apprentice of Master Andrews, your presence will pass unnoticed."

"Stand back with me in this recess," said the citizen, retiring with all his packages into a gloomy corner of the room, as the approach of many footsteps was heard from the anti-chamber.

Andrews and his pretended servant had scarcely thus taken their places, when a door was flung open, and a page in waiting, in a loud voice announced "The King," and in another moment his Majesty entered, followed by about a dozen gentlemen in attendance. Amongst them, Ellen saw with inexpressible consternation, was the Ex-Secretary, Carlton.

She thought of Hubert, and a dread, as of

immediate death, came over her. The blood forsook her cheeks, she trembled from head to foot, and in a voice almost inarticulate from fear and agitation, she returned the gracious, but stately salutation of his Majesty. The surrounding objects swam indistinctly before her eyes ; she saw only two forms—Hubert—and Carlton his deadly enemy, who, more than once, had vowed in her presence, to pursue the audacious youth to an ignominious death, if he ever again discovered any trace of his existence. And now they stood before her, face to face, and she knew that it was for her that Hubert was exposed to this danger.

But it is seldom that a woman's presence of mind long forsakes her, and Ellen, by a violent effort, so quickly mastered her agitation, that his Majesty had no cause to remark it, as more than the confusion of a timid maiden, over-awed by his royal presence.

Carlton, though compelled by the smallness of the apartment to remain in the rear of

the party near the door, had, with his usual quickness of observation, not failed to notice her embarrassment, which he likewise attributed to his unexpected appearance ; his restless eye had not yet pierced beyond the broad person of Master Andrews, who had spread himself out so as completely to screen his apprentice from the observation of the royal party.

“Mistress Ellen Collingwood will favor us by informing the Princess of our presence,” said the King, with calm dignity, as soon as he had taken his place in a velvet-covered arm chair, near the table. “I expected to have found her here.”

“A slight indisposition has compelled her Highness to retire, for a short time, to her chamber,” returned Ellen, in a tremulous voice, for the fear of leaving the chamber even for an instant, rendered it impossible for her to retain the slightest appearance of composure.

“This is no excuse, I trust to conceal her

unwillingness to receive our visit?" demanded Henry, whilst a slight frown threw a shadow over his usually tranquil visage.

Ellen felt there was severity in the tone in which these words were pronounced, and fearful lest she had compromised her mistress by her imprudence, she hastily replied—

"I crave your Majesty's pardon, if I have done wrong in answering thus; but I spoke without the Princess's authority, and I should incur her most serious displeasure, if by my imprudence, your Majesty entertained the slightest doubt of the pleasure and gratitude with which she at all times receives the honor of your company."

"Her presence will be the best proof that our company is agreeable to her," returned the king, coldly; "and, I again request, that she may be informed of our arrival."

Ellen felt with agony, that further delay was impossible; and, with a low reverence to his majesty, she drew back towards the door of the Lady Elizabeth's chamber. She

dared not turn her eyes to the spot where Hubert stood—she dared not cast one glance towards Carlton, but, trembling from head to foot, she again, bent to his majesty, and disappeared behind the tapestry.

She had no sooner left the apartment, than the king turned with a scrutinizing glance, towards the corner, where the jeweller flattered himself, he had, hitherto, escaped observation.

“ Ha ! my worthy Master Andrews, art thou there ?” he said, with a less stately manner than before ; “ thou hast, doubtless, precious objects in that sack of thine ; bring it hither, my good fellow, if its contents be worth looking at.”

“ I thank your majesty, for your majesty’s gracious condescension,” returned the citizen, with a low bow ; “ but they are trifles, mere trifles, not worthy of engaging your Royal Highness’s attention for an instant.”

“ I am the best judge of that !” said Henry, haughtily ; “ Bring them hither without further excuse, and let me decide on their

value. Is the fellow glued to the wall, that he stands bowing there ; or, has the spirit of disobedience infected all the inhabitants of this palace, that they presume, in this manner, to hold parley, instead of obeying my commands !”

“ I crave your Majesty’s pardon, most humbly,” returned the jeweller, advancing with profound servility towards the table ; “ I was only diffident of the merits of my poor merchandize. Far be it from me, to presume, to dispute, for a moment, your Majesty’s royal pleasure.”

“ Ha, there are two of you—are there ?” cried Henry, the moment that the approach of Andrews, left the person of Hubert fully disclosed to view.

“ It is only my poor apprentice, at your Majesty’s command,” said the citizen, with a lower reverence than before.

“ And, is it your custom, Master Andrews, to carry such handsome apprentices under the skirts of your coat, when you visit

your female customers ?" cried Henry, sternly.

Convinced that Hubert's features were familiar to him, though unable, at once, to remember where he had before seen him, the king surveyed him with a severe and searching glance, that would utterly have dismayed one of less noble nature.

But, Carlton had no sooner obtained a full view of his person, than he instantly recognized him ; and, making his way through the crowd of gentlemen, he advanced with quick steps to the front of the royal chair.

" If his Majesty requires any information as to that audacious villain," he said, " it is I, who can best afford it. I have, unfortunately, bitter cause to know him. For the last two months, I have made incessant search for him, as the murderer of my honored relative, Sir Hugh Collingwood ; Providence, as if intent to prove, that crime can never escape its just punishment, has here, in the very presence of your gracious Majesty, delivered him into the hands of jus-

tice. That cunning disguise, is useless to conceal him from my eyes ; and, in the name of my lost relative, I demand the immediate arrest of this lawless borderer, Hubert Saville, as a murderer and incendiary."

" And, what has Hubert Saville to answer to so serious a charge ?" said the king, without, in the slightest degree, betraying his remembrance of his former acquaintance with the accused.

" I retort the accusations against Master Carlton, which has falsely brought against me," answered Hubert, sternly ; " Well knowing, that I am acquainted with the whole of the crimes, by which he has obtained his rich inheritance, that it is in my power to produce a witness, who saw him plunge his dagger in the heart of Sir Hugh Collingwood,—he seeks to rid himself of one, whom he fears—and, at the same time, to cast on another, the odium of his guilt. I pray your Majesty, to see justice done between us ; and, I rely on your protection, against a rich assassin, who believes, that he can crush the

poor and friendless to the earth, as he would a reptile in his path. His audacious falsehood, is equal to the enormity of his crimes."

"I am not astonished by anything this fellow can charge against myself, after his diabolical ingratitude to my kinsman, Sir Hugh, by whom he was educated and supported for many years," said Carlton, with well affected horror. "He is associated with a band of the lawless freebooters of Redesdale ; and, from them, he has taken precious lessons in their several callings of falsehood, rapine, and bloodshed."

"A very fitting apprentice, it should seem, for a quiet, worthy citizen, like you, Master Andrews," said the king. "You were little aware of the character of the servitor you received under your roof, I imagine."

"I don't believe a word of it, please your Majesty," answered the jeweller, with a face as red as scarlet. "The young man has been

well recommended to me, by the reverend brother of my Lord Bishop of Ely, the noble Abbot of the Black Friars in Neweastle, and, if bail can be taken, I am ready to give it for him, to the amount of two thousand pounds. Either Master Carlton has mistaken Master Saville, for somebody else, or there is more in this business, than is quite clear at present, at least, clear to my faculties, saving your Majesty's gracious presence."

"No bail can be taken for one charged with murder," said Carlton, in a low, decided tone.

"It is not necessary, that Master Carlton, should teach us the laws of our kingdom," returned Henry, with marked severity.

"Even if bail could be taken, I should refuse to accept liberty on such terms," was Hubert's calm rejoinder. "A flagrant—a most awful charge has been brought against me, in the presence of my gracious and honored sovereign; and, my most ardent

desire is, that it should be promptly, and fully investigated. I know my innocence, and, having no fears of the result, I submit myself with the utmost alacrity, to the decision of the law. I have no fear of justice ; I fear only perfidy, intrigue, and perjury."

"From those it is our duty to defend our subjects," said the king, gravely. "Master Carlton, have you aught more to say, ere this young man is conducted by our guards to prison ?"

"I have nothing further to demand," answered the ex-secretary, humbly. "The criminal is arrested, and justice will take its course. It is all I can desire."

"Let two of our guard be instantly summoned," cried the king, "to conduct the prisoner to the Tower, there to be kept in close custody, till our further pleasure be known."

A page, in waiting, immediately left the apartment to fulfil this command, and a dead silence followed his departure. His majesty sat grave and stern, with his eyes fixed on

the door ; from which, he, every moment, expected to see the Princess Elizabeth to appear. Even Carlton, was unable to interpret the expression of his countenance ; but, though he, felt sometimes, doubtful of the sincerity of the king's good will towards him, he let no suspicion interfere, to diminish his heartfelt exultation at the arrest of Hubert.

" Means can be found by money, to get rid of him in his prison," he thought, " ere my reputation, or my wealth, are endangered by his public trial. This would have been easier in the late reign—but no matter—money is still omnipotent, from the prison to the throne," and, rendered fearless by this reflection, he gazed with the malice of a triumphant fiend upon the prisoner. Hubert had never once deigned to glance towards him ; he stood apparently calm, awaiting the appearance of the guards ; but, tumultuous thoughts, in the meanwhile, filled his breast. One minute he felt stung to the heart, that the king had given him no sign of recognition, at

another, when he regarded the stately and austere personage before him, on whom the noblest were proud to be in attendance, and remembered the strange adventures of the night they had passed together, he could scarcely believe that the king and the wandering trooper were one, and the same person ; then again, the conviction that their identity was not to be doubted, and a sense of the heartless ingratitude of his sovereign, clouded before a brief space, his ardent sense of loyalty. Such thoughts were, however, speedily dispelled by the remembrance of Ellen ; and, anxious to be taken thence, ere she again appeared, he eagerly watched for the arrival of the guard.

At length the door unclosed ; two soldiers in the royal livery crossed the threshold, and in obedience to a silent sign from the king, proceeded at once to take their places by the side of the accused.

At the same moment, a wild shriek was heard from the opposite side of the apartment. It burst from the lips of Ellen, who,

during the momentary confusion, occasioned by the arrival of the guard, had entered, unobserved, to announce the approach of the Princess Elizabeth. At one glance she understood all that had passed during her absence, and nearly maddened by her terrors for Hubert, she forgot the message of her royal mistress, she forgot the formality imposed by the strict rules of the court, and rushing wildly across the chamber, flung herself at once on her knees at the feet of the king, whilst she implored his mercy, in hurried and broken accents, for Master Hubert Saville.

“ Ah ! is it thus ! and is Master Andrews’s handsome apprentice, also an acquaintance of thine, my fair Ward ?” demanded Henry, with a certain malicious smile, that was rarely seen to enliven his features. “ I begin to understand the mystery of this visit to the palace, somewhat more clearly than I have hitherto been able to do, either from Master Andrews’s explanation, or Master Carlton’s accusations.”

"Oh, give no credit to Master Carlton, I implore your Majesty!" cried Ellen eagerly. "His accusations are as false, as his own black, perjured heart. He—he alone is guilty, and by all that is sacred, I conjure your Majesty, not to permit the innocent to be sacrificed to his vengeance."

"Arise, Mistress Ellen Collingwood," said Henry, "there is no need for either man or woman, to seek justice from me, on their knees. I trust my subjects will quickly be made to feel, they may claim it as their right. Where have you known the prisoner, and learnt to take such a deep interest in his fate, that you dare to cast all maiden fear aside, and make yourself his open advocate?"

Ellen arose, but she did not blush. The rebuke of the king fell harmless as an unfeathered bolt, for she who would have died to rescue Hubert from danger, felt no shame in defending him from dishonour.

"We were brought up together under the roof of my grandmother, from our infancy,"

she simply replied, “ and if your Majesty would know the real character of Hubert Saville, you must give orders for the release of Lady Isabel Collingwood, from the captivity in which she is held by Master Carlton, under the plea of her insanity. She can explain his story better than any living man, except your Majesty’s Almoner, the late confessor of your noble mother, Sir Christopher Urswick.”

Carlton, in spite of all his assurance, became as pale as death, when he heard the last words of Ellen. He remembered the priest, of whom Sir Hugh had spoken in their last interview, as one who had once been acquainted with the secret of Hubert’s birth, and he was terrified by the possibility that this dangerous witness might still be living, in the person of Sir Christopher Urswick, a man so universally respected and beloved, that not a shadow of doubt could be attached to his testimony. He cursed his own impetuosity in bringing the affair under the notice of the king—but, ere long,

he remembered the secrets of the prison-house ; and he smiled as undaunted as before.

The Princess Elizabeth, at this moment, entered, but startled by the unexpected scene of confusion that presented itself, she shrunk back with consternation, till Henry, giving a sign for the prisoner to be led from the apartment, arose, and with a more bland smile than she had ever before seen on his countenance, advanced to meet and re-assure her.

“There is nothing here to excite your apprehensions, my fair cousin,” he said, coldly taking her hand. “It only regards the apprentice of Master Andrews, the jeweller, whom it has been found necessary to send to prison. Mistress Ellen Collingwood will explain all to you, at a more fitting moment, for so long a time has already elapsed since my arrival, that I have scarcely time to make inquiries after your health, without speaking of other matters. I was given to understand your delay was occasioned by

indisposition, but I rejoice to see slight traces of your malady remain."

There was a calm irony in these words, which stung the Princess to the soul, but she smiled, as if she perceived it not, and glancing timidly around at the numerous gentlemen in waiting, she proposed, in trembling accents, for his Majesty to retire to her mother's cabinet, where she was now alone.

"To-day, I must decline this pleasure," returned Henry, as he led her to a seat, and took his place at her side in the most ceremonious and distant manner. "I had only a few minutes to spare from the hurry of public business, when I came hither to pass them in your highness's company. They are now nearly at an end, and when informed of your indisposition, I should instantly have withdrawn, had I not been anxious to inform you, that my coronation is fixed for the thirteenth of the month, and to request that you will communicate my desire to your mother, that she, yourself,

and your young sisters, should join in the procession to the Abbey."

Elizabeth bowed in silence. Her heart was too full for words, for she felt that the performance of this ceremony, ere the celebration of her marriage, gave her a right to assume the crown with her husband, and the implied command that she should form a part of the pageant, was a most bitter insult, dictated by Henry's jealousy of her claims, as heiress to the throne of her father, Edward the Fourth, and the fear that he might be supposed to enjoy his power, only in right of his wife.

"Your highness has understood my proposition, I trust!" demanded his Majesty when he found no answer was returned, "and I flatter myself it meets your approbation."

"It is the duty of myself, and my family, to submit in all things to our sovereign's commands," was the only reply that Elizabeth could force her lips to utter, and there was a slight touch of offended pride in her

manner, such as Henry had never before seen her betray.

"Obedience is a cold word, my fair cousin," he returned. "I sought to give you pleasure, but if I have failed, the fault is yours, not mine. I trust I have no reason to fear, that the fickle and capricious character of your changeable mother, has descended to her daughter. You weep, lady? worse and worse—my visit, it should seem, has been undertaken under evil auspices, and as my presence appears irksome to you, I will at once relieve you of my company. Whatever may be the cause of your sorrow, it is better you should weep alone."

"I pray your Majesty to pardon my weakness," murmured Elizabeth, softly laying her hand on his arm as he arose.

"I pardon all things save ingratitude," was the grave reply, "and I hope, when next we meet, I shall find you less feeble, and better able to receive me with a cheerful countenance. You will do well to re-

member, that melancholy has no charms for me. Farewell, Madam. My council awaits me, and I regret that public business compels me to deny myself the pleasure of prolonging my visit."

At the commencement of these words, Henry had arisen, apparently utterly unmindful of the soft fingers that rested on his arm, but as he ceased speaking, he took the unresisting hand of the princess in his, and kissed it with a cold courtesy that was meant for the eyes of the spectators. Elizabeth, in almost inaudible accents, returned his farewell, and then remained standing like a statue in the centre of the chamber, till her affianced husband and his suite had disappeared.

Her first impulse, when the falling tapestry had shut them from her view, was to turn and cast herself into the arms of Ellen, who had been a near and agonized spectator of the foregoing scene.

Her own sorrows redoubled her sympathy for those of her mistress, and each confid-

ing in the other, they found in their mutual pity, that consolation which they would otherwise have sought in vain, from the intriguing and cold-hearted courtiers by whom they were surrounded.

CHAPTER V.

HUBERT, in obedience to the commands of the king, was conducted direct to the Tower. On his arrival there, he was consigned by his guards, with certain secret instructions, to the care of Master Thomas Apsley, the gentleman gaoler, who was entrusted with the custody of state prisoners, and whose duty it was to carry the axe of the Tower before them to trial.

He made no inquiries, for, conscious of

his innocence, he regarded his captivity as a mere step towards his full and open acquittal of the charges that had been brought against him ; and as the king had been a witness of his arrest, he entertained not the fears he might otherwise have done, of his intriguing and unprincipled accuser.

After passing through the dwelling of the Warder, he was led into a gloomy, vaulted corridor, and thence into a low dungeon, where the door being suddenly closed upon him, he was left in solitude, and almost total darkness. The feeble lamp that hung suspended in a deep recess, scarcely making visible the damp and massive stone walls, that surrounded his narrow prison.

A bundle of straw thrown on the floor, offered the prisoner's only bed, and a stone bench his only seat ; and as the day declined, a scanty measure of coarse food was brought him, which he was told would be his portion morning and evening.

But Hubert, amidst these deprivations, was happier than he had been since he had

left his native mountains. He had seen Ellen, he was once more assured of her love, and he forgot his danger, and the misery surrounding him, in the bright dreams which his excited imagination once more boldly indulged.

Had he seen the sinister figure of Carlton enter the apartments of the gaoler, in the gloom of evening, his hopes of the future, might have been somewhat clouded.

But for his repose, he was happily ignorant, that the wily Secretary was received with the utmost respect and submission, by Master Thomas Apsley.

“It is long, very long, Master Carlton, since I have been thus honoured,” said the gaoler, a little, thin aged man, whose sharp features bore the strongest expression of malice and avidity. “I marvel what lucky chance, I am now to thank, for the pleasure of your company.”

“Believe me,” answered Carlton, “I have never forgotton the numerous services, for

which I was indebted to you during the last reign."

" Not indebted, Master Carlton—no, not indebted—I would you were ! " was the shrill response, " but I am compelled to admit, you always paid me exactly, for any little service it was in my power to afford you, or his majesty in your name." And the old man coughed and laughed significantly. " Bad times for us now, Master Carlton ! they say justice is likely to come into fashion, and there will be an end of all those snug little jobs, that, luckily for us at least, were so often needful to be done, in King Richard's time, when I had oftener the axe to carry to execution than to trial. Ah, his Majesty of blessed memory, was a generous master. But those days are done, and we must make the best of a bad matter. The world says, you have played a winning game, Master Carlton, and for my part, at least, I am still in my old quarters."

“ I was rejoiced to hear it,” said the courtier, “ and, I assure you, for those who understand what they are about, matters are not so bad at present as some honest souls are disposed to think. Money is omnipotent—and when that is the case, a man must be a fool indeed, who cannot carry on his affairs, pretty much according to his own pleasure. If I mistake not, you have had a new prisoner placed in your custody to-day,” he added, suddenly assuming a more serious tone.

“ Ha, you know him, do you, Master Carlton,” returned Apsley, with a peculiar, sharp, inquisitive expression, in his pale grey eyes.

“ Yes, I know him, and it is by my accusation that he is here,” said the secretary, “ and I must tell you frankly, there are many reasons which make me anxious that his career should finish within these walls. His Majesty unluckily was present at his arrest—certain friends of his at Court, when aware of his imprisonment, will probably use every means to effect his liberation. Yet

his crimes are great and indisputable, but you are well aware, that there are cases where money and women's influence can do much, especially when a young and handsome fellow is in question. You will do me a personal favor, and confer an obligation on the public, if you will assist me to render useless all such intrigues. You understand me, Master Apsley."

"Perfectly," returned the old man, with a chuckling laugh. "Always the same, Master Carlton, always the same. York, or Tudor—it is all the same to you—ever some little snug business in hand ! eh! and you are quite right to come to me. You have not a trustier friend in the kingdom than Thomas Apsley."

"I know it," answered the courtier, "and I hope you believe, that I in return am not unmindful of your interests, and if a thousand royals are worth your acceptance _____"

"A pretty sum—a very pretty sum, Master Carlton——"

“Especially, when it can be made to fall into your pocket, without the smallest risk, and scarcely any trouble.”

“Nevertheless, I warrant no man gives such a bonus, without expecting some little work to be done, which some might be scrupulous of undertaking,” replied the gaoler, with a cunning nod.

“There you are right, Master Apsley. No man is willing now a days, to pay largely for nothing. Money has its worth, and is only given by fools without value received.”

“And what may be the commodity, which I am expected to furnish for this pretty little sum ?”

“A mere trifle, as I have before told you,” said Carlton, shrugging up his shoulders. “We have already spoken of your prisoner. He is somewhat sickly——”

“Never saw a healthier fellow in my life !”

“He gets rapidly worse,” continued the courtier, without noticing this interruption, confinement and anxiety bring on a raging

fever, and he either dies in the doctor's hands, or he hangs himself, in a delirium, from the bars of his prison window."

"Or the blood may mount to his head in the night, eh!" said the gaoler. "I understand—and all this is possible, very possible. It would not be the first nor the second time that such things have happened, to our knowledge, but then you must remember, that the weight in the scale that made these poor wretches' fortunes kick the beam, was something heavier than a thousand royals."

"And they were persons of more importance than this prisoner," answered Carlton. "He is neither more nor less than a poor foundling, who fought as a common soldier under the banner of Sir Gilbert Talbot, at Bosworth."

"Look you, Master Carlton," answered Apsley, keenly, "between you and me, in these matters, there should be no secrets, and I am not such a fool as to believe every lie which you or any other knave may please to tell me. This young man must be

something more than a foundling, and a common soldier, or I will be hanged, if you, or any of your friends, would think it worth your while to pay a thousand royals to get quit of him, more especially, when there is every chance, that if his trial be judiciously managed, he may be hanged before the end of the month."

"What do you mean by these objections, Master Apsley ?" said Carlton, regarding him with keen and searching eyes.

"I mean, Master Carlton, that if you wish to hear no more of my prisoner, I must be made sure of putting *two* thousand royals into my coffers, before the end of the week."

"The price is high," answered the secretary, "but if the work be quickly done, it shall be paid."

"Quickly," muttered the gaoler, "will to-night be quick enough to content you ?"

"Yes, to-night, by all means, to-night. As his arrest has come beneath the immediate observation of the King, there is no knowing what inquiries and ridiculous in-

vestigations may be made, unless the fellow is at once removed from the scene, so let it be to-night, I beg of you. Here are five hundred royals, by way of security, and when I am assured that all is in order, the remainder shall be forth coming, from the same quarter—with this condition, only—that no inquiries are made, as to the name, or character of those, who have entrusted me with this commission.”

“ Always cautious, Master Carlton—always cautious—“ returned the miser, whose dim eyes glistened at the sight of the gold. “ Ten — twenty — fifty — a hundred. All right, sir, all right, and upon such security, believe me, that my part of our contract, shall be most exactly fulfilled.”

“ I do not doubt it, Master Apsley,” returned the courtier, “ and I count, as in former days, on your secrecy.”

“ You are right,” was the reply. “ Perhaps it may be hazardous for you to repeat your visit—suspicions might be excited that you had brought some infection into the prison, so I will send to you, Master Carlton. It

will suffice if I say, I have despatched the packet to France, as you desired. Eh ! to France !”

“I admire your prudence ! and as time is now flying fast, I will leave you to make the little arrangements which may be necessary. Two thousand royals in all, Master Apsley—you will not forget—and a pan of charcoal in the dungeon when he sleeps. Farewell.”

“No, no, sir, I don’t readily forget these little matters. I have no need of keeping notes, I warrant you—all clear in the upper story yet, heaven be praised. So when all is safe in France, I shall count on my money —eh, eh, eh !—farewell, sir—farewell.”

Carlton pressed his hand and departed.

“As pretty a piece of rascality, as any within the four seas,” muttered the old man, when thus left alone. “If he had been less of a scoundrel, his head must have come to the block long before this, but he and I have kept our brains on our shoulders, in a marvellous manner, it must be confessed. I wonder who this youth can be, that he sets so high

a price upon his head. An heir to the Crown perhaps, in some shape or another—but it is no matter to me, so long as it puts money in my purse—only now I think of that, I was a fool to be content with so small a sum.”

When these reflections came to a termination, the old man placed himself in a leathern chair, and extending his legs before the fire, began steadily to consider the means of executing his iniquitous task.

It was midnight, and all was still within the prison, when the gaoler once more sat in the same room, chuckling with inward delight that the moment for the sacrifice of his victim was rapidly approaching. At his side stood a small box, containing a chafing dish full of charcoal, which he busied himself from time to time, in arranging, as if impatient to awaken its deadly fumes. The hint of Carlton, had not been lost on Master Apsley.

Occasionally, the universal tranquillity was interrupted by the dull sound of footsteps through the long passages near, or by

the stifled moans of some poor prisoner, and once, a cry of impatient agony, pierced even the dull ear of the callous old man. He gazed for a moment around his dimly lighted chamber, as if to assure himself that he was alone, then suddenly extending his withered palms before the fire, he sat watching an hour-glass on the chimney, whose sand had nearly half run out, since the twelfth hour had struck ; only from time to time, turning his head on one side, to listen, to ascertain if the sounds which had at first disturbed his meditations, had at length ceased.

“ All sleep !” he muttered, when another quarter of an hour had passed, “ and I must no longer delay, or there will not be time before morning, to remove the chafing dish, ere the warders are astir,” and without further hesitation, he took a burning brand from the chimney, and set fire to the charcoal in the box. Then rapidly closing it down, he hid it under his mantle, and hurried towards an inner door of his chamber, which led towards the dungeons

But ere he reached it, the great bell at the entrance of his dwelling rang loud and long. Like one electrified, he cast the fatal fire-box from him, and rushed towards the head of the stairs.

"If it be a messenger from the King himself," he cried, "give no man admission."

But he was already too late. The porter heard him not, and had already thrown wide the doors, and given admission to a gentleman and four attendants, whom he quickly heard ascending to the spot where he stood.

"If the fire had only been in the cell, there would have been no time lost," he muttered to himself, as he retreated towards his parlor, and smoothing down his locks, and wrapping a furred night-gown around him, he prepared to receive his unexpected guests, as if he had just arisen from his bed.

The stranger had been not less quick in his movements, and the arrangements of Master Apsley were scarcely concluded, ere he was ushered into his presence, followed

by his four servants, who were all completely armed.

He was a young and handsome man, attired in the richest fashion of the Court, but utterly unknown to the gaoler, who, whilst he regarded him with wonder and curiosity, demanded his business with the most obsequious courtesy.

“That will explain it,” was the stranger’s concise reply, as he delivered a paper to Master Apsley. He saw with surprise and consternation, on perusing it, that it was a warrant, signed by the King, for the immediate delivery of the prisoner, Hubert Saville, to the custody of the bearer.

The old man was struck dumb with bewilderment, yet he did not lose his presence of mind, and laying down the paper, he began to rub his spectacles, as if he had been unable to decipher it.

“No unnecessary delay, Master Apsley.” said his visiter sternly, “if you cannot see, you can hear, that you are commanded by this paper, written by the

king himself, instantly to place Master Hubert Saville in my custody, on pain of his Majesty's heavy displeasure."

"It shall be done—it shall be done," returned the wily old man, and with apparent alacrity, he begged the stranger to follow him, as he led the way to a long passage, opening from the further end of the chamber.

Many and various were the turns and windings through which he conducted the party, till at length the courtier lost all patience, and protested that if he did not bring him to the cell of the prisoner, before another minute had elapsed, he would make him feel a touch of his rapier, in a manner that would quicken his movements.

"A thousand pardons, my noble master," said the cringing miser, "but you must not forget that my limbs are no longer young, and supple like your own; but, heaven be praised, we are here at last," and, having withdrawn the bolts, he pushed open the

door of a vault, and desired the gentleman to enter.

Trembling and anxious, Apsley stood without the portal, whilst the courtier, taking a torch in his hand, sprang forwards, towards a sleeping figure that lay on a bundle of straw, in a low arched recess.

But in an instant he returned with the velocity of lightning, and, seizing the trembling gaoler by the collar, he shook him till his teeth chattered in his head.

“ Scoundrel !” he exclaimed, “ what means this imposition ? How have you dared to bring me hither, when you know that yon poor wretch, bears no more resemblance to Hubert Saville, than the crow to the eagle !”

“ Ah, you know him, do you ?” muttered Apsley, regarding him from the corners of his pale eyes, with spiteful malice.

“ Yes, villain, and I know you, too, better than you are aware,” answered the stranger, “ so forward, I command you, and, if this

delay has been imagined, to gain time for the perpetration of another of your infamous crimes, and I find that a hair of my friend's head has suffered, since he was consigned to your custody, you shall instantly be given into the hands of justice, to meet the punishment you have long deserved."

Further threats were needless. Apsley saw that delays or deception, were not only useless, but dangerous, and, recovering at once, his powers of motion, only a few moments elapsed, ere he had conducted the unknown to the door of Hubert's dungeon.

All within, was as still as death ; and, as the withered hand of the old man, turned the key in the massive door, he felt he had now, reason to rejoice, that the visit of the stranger had not been deferred a quarter of an hour later.

"I can tell Master Carlton all the same, that the packet is sent to France ; and, if I secure the money, before he learns to the contrary—he can never dare to reclaim it,

so it is as well as it is," he thought, as he stood back, to let the stranger pass.

"The young nobleman, whose fears had been excited to the highest pitch, lost not a moment, ere he hurried past him, and waving his torch on high, called loudly on the name of Hubert Saville.

"Who seeks me, at this dead hour of the night?" was the reply of the astonished prisoner, as he arose, half bewildered from his bed of straw.

"A friend," was the stranger's response; and, almost at the same moment, that he recognized his visiter to be Lord Clifford, whom he had known as the Shepherd of the Moors, he was clasped with the warmest embrace of friendship, in the arms of the generous hearted, and grateful young nobleman.

"I have sought for you long," he said, "and little thought we were destined to meet in such a place. But, come, my gallant friend. I bear a king's warrant for your immediate removal—for you were not

forgotten in your captivity. You must be content for awhile, to be my prisoner ; but, I trust, that will give you no anxiety. You may be assured, I have, alone, undertaken the office of your jailor, as a means of serving you. I have not forgotten, that all I now possess, I owe to your bravery and generosity. But, let us hence, I beg ; there is no time to be lost."

" Dare I indeed believe, that the king interests himself in my behalf ?" demanded Hubert, eagerly.

" Of that, you will know more, hereafter ! I can say nothing, now, but, that you are my prisoner, and I trust, with your own consent."

" Most certainly," answered Saville. " I feel that I cannot be sufficiently grateful, that you have deigned to undertake such a task, and will follow you joyfully, wheresoever it be your pleasure to conduct me."

" Let us depart, then, my brave friend," returned Lord Clifford, leading the prisoner by the hand from his cell.

Then turning towards Master Apsley, who stood without, listening with curiosity and astonishment, to all that passed, he said in a severe tone—

“Master Thomas Apsley, although for some mysterious reason, you appeared anxious to defeat the intention of the royal warrant, yet, as I have found your prisoner in safety, I shall be silent as to what has passed to-night. But, ere we part, I must warn you, that, for your own personal advantage, you will do well to be cautious for the future. There are more eyes and ears open—even within these walls*—than you appear aware of; and, though you may have paid largely to retain your place, there are others ready to pay yet higher, to take it from you. Times are changed, Master Apsley.”

“I believe Master Hubert Saville has had no reason to complain of my conduct, since he has been my prisoner,” said the gaoler, who, believing after all, that had passed, that the stranger and his friend, were both men

of high rank, and favour at court, attended them even to the outer gates of the fortress, with the most fawning servility.

The young men, slightly returned his parting salutations, and, mounting the horses that awaited them, rode towards Whitehall.

During their progress along Fleet Street and the Strand, Hubert could only exchange a few hurried words with Lord Clifford, who, intentionally evaded entering into any confidential conversation.

“ I have apartments in the palace, at Whitehall,” he said, riding close up to Hubert, as they approached Charing Cross ; “ and, it is thither, I am conducting you ; but, as the king is desirous that no man should know of your entrance save myself, we will here dismount, and I will send back the men with the horses, to my mother’s house in the Strand. We will then proceed alone, to a private door in the eastern turret, of which, for this night, I have been intrusted with the key.”

"Order everything, my lord, as you please,
I can only obey with gratitude," was the
young man's reply ; and, both the friends
immediately dismounting, the servants
were dismissed, and they pursued their
way alone,

CHAPTER VI.

THE night was so dark, that little could be distinguished of the royal dwelling at Westminster ; but, enough of its outline was discernible, to awaken in the mind of Hubert, a thousand strange reflections on that fortune, which transferred him at once, in so extraordinary a manner, from a prison to a palace.

But, amidst all the confusion of ideas thus excited, he never, for a moment forgot,

that Lord Clifford was the affianced husband of Ellen ; and, with the utmost impatience, he followed him along the stone-vaulted passages of that part of the palace, to which his key had given them admission. He was fully resolved, as soon as they reached the privacy of the young nobleman's apartments, to disclose to him the whole story of his love, and to make an appeal to his generosity, by requesting him, not to insist on a union with Ellen, to which her heart was most decidedly opposed.

The staircases and galleries they passed, were all dimly lighted by small lamps, suspended at intervals from the walls ; and, from time to time, in some dark niche of the massive stone-work, a slight movement, as Hubert and his companion passed, or the glitter of arms, drew their attention to a guard—who, there, kept midnight watch. At length, after ascending a narrow winding staircase, Lord Clifford ushered his prisoner into a small square

gothic chamber, where a lamp was dimly burning, and a page lay sleeping on one of the benches. But, they passed on with such caution, that his slumbers were undisturbed by their light footsteps.

The next room they entered was evidently a dining apartment, and unoccupied. Lord Clifford here paused, and as he listened for a moment, low voices were distinctly audible from the adjoining chamber.

“Enter, Master Hubert,” he said, opening the door as he spoke ; “there is no one there, whose presence need cause you the least apprehension.”

In obedience to this command, the young man advanced into a small, but richly furnished chamber, where, in the light of a large fire, and six wax tapers, his dazzled eyes, could, at first, only distinguish dimly, two female figures, sitting with their backs turned towards him.

One, in deep mourning, no sooner heard the sound of his steps, than starting from her seat, with a faint cry, she turned, and

extending her arms as she rushed towards him, he scarcely knew that it was Ellen, ere he held her clasped to his heart.

This sudden transition from the horror of a prison, and the disgrace even of an unmerited captivity, to joy so unexpected, was too much, even for the firm heart of Hubert, to support with any appearance of tranquillity, and, losing all self-command, he wept as men are seldom seen to weep.

“Angel!” he at length murmured, “is it then a second time that I owe to thee my preservation. How can I ever prove my gratitude?”

“Love me, Hubert—love me, as you have hitherto done,” she returned in soft accents, “I ask no more, for I have not forgotten Newcastle, and all you did for me there.” Then after a pause, she took Saville by the hand, and turning to Lord Clifford, continued, “Let us not talk of mutual obligations, when it is to this noble friend, that our gratitude is chiefly due.”

“Ellen, have you told him all?” demanded Hubert eagerly.

"All!" said the young nobleman, blushing deeply, "and henceforth I trust you will regard me, not as a rival, but a friend," and he grasped the hand of his guest, with the same warm energy, as when he wore a shepherd's garb.

"It was thus I thought, and felt, you would act," replied Saville with the same ardour, "and under this persuasion I advised Ellen to confide in your generosity."

"This counsel gave me courage," said the lady, "to hasten immediately after your arrest, to relate all that had passed to Lord Clifford. I told him of our love, of my firm resolution never to become the wife of any other man. Confiding in his noble nature, I then ventured to implore him to go to the king, to give him exact information as to your acquaintance with Carlton's attack on the Manor House, and assassination of my father, as well as to recount the bravery you displayed in rescuing me from his power at Newcastle."

"But I told him nothing of the probabi-

lity there existed, of your being proved the true heir to the lands of Collingwood, should Carlton perish on the scaffold," said Clifford, with a quiet smile. "The prospect that this rich possession may devolve to the crown, will render his Majesty much more anxious to convict the Secretary, than if he knew a son of Sir Reginald yet survived to claim it. At present, he is impatient to avail himself of your services, to get rid of a man he detests, and whom he pardoned only to make use of, to a certain point. That time is nearly passed ; his treachery has filled the royal coffers with rich confiscations, and now he must pay his tribute in turn. For this the king has need of you, Master Hubert, and it is thus, the villain will at length meet the punishment he so justly deserves ; not to avenge the injured, but enrich his Majesty. You must therefore be ready to fulfil the royal wishes, as simple Master Saville, and no more."

"And know you nothing of Lady Isabel ? have no efforts been made to liberate her

from the power of her remorseless enemy?" eagerly demanded Hubert.

"The Princess Elizabeth has more than once kindly undertaken to speak to the king for me, on this point," answered Ellen, "but no direct answer has ever been given to her petition, there being little doubt, that his Majesty was unwilling to irritate Carlton, by any interference in his private affairs, as long as his services were of value; and here is another friend, who has likewise exerted all her influence to aid me in this matter," and as she ceased speaking, she turned towards the second lady, who, as if unwilling to be any restraint upon the party, had remained during the whole conversation, with her face resolutely turned towards the fire.

"Master Saville has surely not forgotten my mother," said Lord Clifford interposing, whilst the old lady herself, with a loud and merry laugh, saluted him most cordially, and advancing from her seat, displayed, in rich court garments, the worthy mistress of

the mountain hovel, who had confided her son to his care, only two months before.

“Matters are changed with my boy and myself, Master Hubert, since we parted,” she cried. “Though not many weeks have gone over our heads, the winter has passed, and we are as prosperous as the flowers in the spring. But though we have laid aside linsey woolsey, and taken to silks and embroidery, our hearts are precisely in the same place. We are no upstarts to be spoilt by prosperity. We are just what we were, with this difference only, that we no longer fear to receive an honest man under our roof, or to acknowledge, that my son’s father, was the gallant Lord Clifford, who fell fighting for the house of Lancaster, and that we are the steadfast friends of all who ever followed King Henry’s banner. And, Master Saville, I am no longer afraid to tell you, that Lady Isabel was the dearest friend of my youth. I should have been proud to see my son the husband of her grand-daughter—but if Heaven wills it

otherwise, and you are indeed the son of her lost Reginald, whom she has wept for a quarter of a century—ah, Master Hubert—Thomas must look elsewhere for a bride, and I shall rejoice to behold the accomplishment of my old friend's wishes. I hold it my duty to do all in my power, to procure her some moments of happiness in her old age."

"Such sentiments, Lady Clifford, do honor to your heart," returned Hubert, who scarcely knew how to reply, to such a flood of words.

"Not at all," she answered, "it is only natural, and I should be a monster, if I forgot how you took my son behind you on your horse, and all the risk you ran, to get him safely to the Earl of Richmond's army. Ah, Master Saville, it would have been a bad day for us, if ever he had been forced to draw his sword for the House of York. But heaven protected the widow and the orphan, and you were made his instrument, and so, here we are, all safe and comfortable at last,

And, I gave my boy a good education ; and, no man can say, he is a disgrace to his father, or his newly recovered honours. But, bless me, whilst we are talking here, we have quite forgotten your supper ! and, I warrant, the prison fare has not spoiled your appetite —so, my son, draw the table hither, and Master Saville, will find something to drink our healths, at least.”

This order was speedily obeyed, and, to the great delight of his noble hostess, Hubert did ample and rapid justice to the viands she had prepared for him.

“ And now, my son,” said the worthy dowager, after another half hour had passed ; “ Mistress Ellen and I will return to my house, to take a little sleep, and leave you to show your guest to his chamber, for we must not forget, in pleasant discourse, that to-morrow brings with it its cares, for which sleep can best prepare us.”

No objection could be made to this proposition ; and, though unwillingly, the lovers were compelled to part.

When Hubert arose on the morrow, he was disappointed to find that Ellen, having received an early summons from the princess, had returned to Baynard's Castle. He was yet more surprised to learn, that his host had received an order to conduct him privately to the king's presence, at the ninth hour.

Lord Clifford, evidently counted much upon the honour of this interview, and augured thence, the most auspicious results ; but Hubert, though he gave no utterance to his thoughts, was less sanguine ; and, it was more with apprehension than with hope, that he passed from the Tower, and entered by a back passage, the cabinet of his majesty, where Lord Clifford left him, to await his return in his own apartments.

The chamber of the king was unoccupied, and, during the half hour that Hubert remained there alone, in a state of the most anxious suspense, he failed not to remark, that every object it contained, bore testimony to the habits of industry and order,

which were the most striking characteristics of its owner. Papers neatly folded and labelled, were disposed in small parcels on the table ; a half finished calculation, lay beside several small books of accounts ; and papers, torn into shreds, were still scattered, half consumed, amongst the smouldering fire in the chimney. No object of luxury, or taste, enlivened the gloomy severity of the apartment ; and, the only articles of apparent value it contained, were a golden crucifix, hung against the wall, and a splendidly bound missal, that lay open on a carved oak reading desk.

When Saville, at length, heard footsteps in the neighbouring chamber, he hastily arose from the stool, on which he had ventured to repose, and stood erect with beating heart. The steps drew nearer still—the door slowly unclosed, and the king entered, unushered, unannounced. Hubert fell with respectful reverence on one knee.

Evidently expecting his visiter, his ma-

jesty looked instantly around in search of him.

“ Ha ! Master Saville,” he said, as soon as he perceived the kneeling soldier ; “ arise, I beg of you. My Lord Clifford has been punctual in the performance of his promises, I see. You scarcely thought last night, I imagine, that you should find yourself here this morning.”

“ Please your majesty,” returned Hubert, respectfully but gracefully, when he again stood erect, “ it was only natural, that I should be fearful your Royal Highness had forgotten me.”

“ It is not expedient, at all times, to acknowledge all my acquaintance,” answered Henry gravely, “ but I forget no man who merits remembrance ; more especially one, to whom I am indebted for my life. Yes, Master Saville—I repeat the words, to you I am indebted for my life, and you know it, yet have forborne either to claim a reward, or to betray, in very trying positions, your recognition of my person. I know how to

estimate such conduct, above all, at a time, when I am wearied by the incessant demands of insatiable applicants, whose greedy search for gold and preferment, is never to be appeased—each and all asserting, that I owe my throne, to their zeal, when by my faith, if I had fifty thrones, and yielded up the patronage and wealth of all, they could not suffice to content the appetite of these rapacious cormorants. I thought, poor fool, when I was Earl of Richmond, they served me from attachment to my person, or my family, or at worst, from party spirit; but now I find it was only to turn the tables on their rivals, and profit in their turn, by plundering the state. I have been pleased to find that you are not one of these—and had my agents been able to discover you sooner, you should earlier have been rewarded as you merit.”

“Pardon me,” said Hubert with a profound reverence, “but I have been less disinterested in my service, than your Majesty is graciously pleased to imagine. The fortunes of all my best friends were inseparably united with

yours, as the representative of the interests of the House of Lancaster."

"And pray who are your best friends?" demanded the king, with some curiosity.

"Lady Isabel Collingwood, my protectress from childhood, contributed largely to raise a company that fought in your Majesty's cause," replied Hubert.

"Ha! and Master Carlton, after, as you assert, assassinating her son, has rewarded her services by a prison. Is it not thus?"

"Please your Majesty, there is, to the best of my belief, a living witness of the first of these facts."

"Know you where this person is to be found?"

"Were I at liberty, Sire," answered Hubert anxiously, "I have no doubt that on one condition, this could shortly be done."

"Ha, Master Saville! you too wish to make conditions," returned the king with a slight smile of bitter irony.

"Not, for myself," answered the young man unabashed, "but for a woman—a fee-

ble persecuted woman—for such was the sole witness of the death of Sir Hugh Collingwood ; and the dagger of Carlton, with which he perpetrated the crime, is in her keeping.”

“ Ha ! and she probably requires gold for her evidence ?” returned Henry sarcastically.

“ No, so please your Majesty, she requires nothing but a full and gracious pardon from your Majesty.”

“ In truth, you propose to bring forward a pretty witness, if she hath need that her own crimes be forgiven, ere she can appear as the accuser of another. Has she conspired against the state, or sought by witchcraft to destroy me when arms proved of no avail ?”

“ Neither my Liege. She is another victim of Master Carlton’s villany, and innocent and loyal as the noblest subject of your Majesty.”

“ Of what crime then, doth she stand accused ?” demanded Henry.

“Of heresy!”

“Ah, Master Saville, that is a serious charge if proved, and one we cannot pardon lightly,” was the king’s cold reply.

“Her father, one Brian Sandford,” returned Hubert, “was, by the cruel persecution of Carlton, burnt as a Lollard, during the reign of Edward the Fourth, on Tower Hill. His young, and innocent daughter, who was involved in the same accusation, found means to escape. She has lived disguised for many years, with friends of the House of Lancaster, who all regarded her as a good Catholic. When last we met, it was in the Monastery of the Black Friars at Newcastle, where she was greatly the means of effecting the liberation of Mistress Ellen Collingwood, from Carlton’s power, who pursued them both to the chapel. There the secretary recognized her, in the presence of the abbot, and sought to arrest her as a heretic, but the holy man spurned his accusations, and granted her the privilege of sanctuary.”

“ And she remains in this asylum ?”

“ She was sent thence by the abbot, with letters to the Princess Elizabeth, at Sheriffe-huten—at that time, a service of danger—and, since then, she has been no more heard of,” was Hubert’s reply. “ Her father’s friend, Marston Conyers, of Redesdale, had afforded her previously, a home in the northern wilds,—but, his name, most unjustly, stands on the list of traitors—and this, combined with her own dangerous position, and Master Carlton’s reputed favour at court, has, probably, made her return again into concealment.”

“ The Abbot Morton intrusted her with letters, you say, to the Princess Elizabeth ?” inquired the king.

“ I have been thus informed, by Mistress Ellen Collingwood—with whom, by the abbot’s command, she travelled to Yorkshire.”

“ This a strong fact, which suffices to acquit her of heresy,” returned Henry, tak-

ing up his pen, after some minutes' reflection. "That Marston Conyers, one of our own, right true, and loyal soldiers, is on the list of the attainted, is the work of the Queen Dowager; but, I have no inclination to sacrifice a trusty servant to her spleen—and, my worthy almoner, Sir Christopher Urswick—by whom, he has been long employed—has written me so powerful a letter in his behalf, that I have no hesitation in placing in your hands, a written pardon, both for the gallant trooper, and this female heretic; since it appears, the Church, in the person of our trusty servant, the Abbot Morton, has, already, received her into its bosom. Her name, Master Saville?" he added, looking up, after he had written a few minutes with rapidity.

"Marion Sandford," was Hubert's reply, and, as he saw the hand of Henry affix his royal signature in due form, to these precious papers—which contained the promise of life and pardon, to his noble hearted friend, Conyers, and the poor persecuted girl, whose

hopes, whose happiness, whose very existence had been blighted for years, by the cruelty of her heartless enemy, whose punishment appeared now rapidly approaching,—when he remembered all the disinterested aid they had given him, and felt that he, poor, unknown, and powerless, as he appeared to be, had been the means of obtaining for them, the boon of royal pardon, his heart beat with the proudest sentiments of satisfaction he had ever in his life experienced, and tears of joy, such as he had seldom shed, swelled even to overflowing in his eyes.

The king, at one glance, read the feelings of his heart ; and, capable of appreciating the generosity of others, though feelings of caution and avidity, frequently arrested the liberal impulses of his own breast, he presented him the papers with a smile.

Hubert received them on bended knee, and presumed to kiss with gratitude, the hand by which they were bestowed.

“Arise, Master Saville,” said Henry, with that cheerfulness, which ever attends on the consciousness of a good action. “You have, hitherto, spoken only of others, but we must now think, what it is in our power to bestow on yourself, as a remembrance of the night we passed together in the farmer’s stable. I pray you, name in what way, I can best serve you, and it shall be done.”

“For myself, please your Majesty?” replied Hubert, modestly; “you have, already, restored me to liberty, and I shall be proud and happy, to devote myself to your service. I have only one petition to make, and that is, that means be taken without delay, to liberate Lady Isabel Collingwood, from the captivity in which she is now held, by Master Carlton, and to conduct her under a safe escort, to London.”

“Ever more mindful of others, than of yourself, young man,” returned the king, surveying him with a scrutinizing glance, as if half suspecting, that this was only a prelude

to some important, and selfish request; but the perfect simplicity with which Hubert met his gaze—the undisguised frankness of his honest countenance, disarmed, even the mistrust of the cautious monarch. Finding that no answer was returned to his observation, he, at length, added, in a less ambiguous tone, “Is this all you have to request, Master Saville?”

“All, so please your Majesty, which I ask as a favor from your generosity,” returned the young man, firmly, yet with profound respect; “but, should it ever please the Heavenly Providence, to permit the discovery of my birth, I may, probably, once more, appeal to your Majesty for justice.”

“I trust,” said Henry, gravely, “that during my reign, no man will ever have cause to say, that justice has been withheld from the meanest of my subjects. If you have claims, prove them, and though they be to the proudest title in my realm, your rights shall be supported to the uttermost.

I shall be delighted to see a man of so honorable a character as yourself, take a high and well-merited place, amidst the gentlemen of my realm."

Hubert bowed, but without making any reply.

"For the present," continued the king, "be assured that the liberation of Lady Isabel and her journey to London, shall be my first care. She will be an important witness against Carlton. On you I depend, for the discovery of the woman, Marion Sandford, and as soon as I am assured that she is ready to give her evidence, the ex-secretary shall be instantly arrested. I have need of him four and twenty hours longer, for a business now before the Council, and till then, you must use your best endeavours to conceal yourself from his observation, for no doubt, informed of your liberation, though he will dare do nothing openly against you, for the fear of our displeasure, he will not fail to put his secret agents at work to dis-

cover whither Lord Clifford hath conveyed you."

"I thank your Majesty, for the gracious interest you are pleased to take in my safety," returned Hubert, once more falling on one knee before the king, "and yet more for the condescension you have shown, in granting the humble petitions I have dared to proffer, for your acceptance. The prayers of the innocent, whom you have generously been pleased to rescue from the unjust persecution of their enemies, will, believe me, be ever offered up with gratitude to the throne of mercy, for the long life and prosperity of their beloved Sovereign."

"The prayers of the faithful are precious offerings, even before the footstool of kings," returned Henry, piously bowing his head, "it is my proudest task to merit them. Forget not, Master Saville, that my ear at all future times is open to your demands, and now, farewell—the cares of public business at present demand our time," and

holding forth his hand, the young man kissed it with profound respect.

Then arising, Hubert once more expressed his sense of the honor and favor that had been conferred on him, and bowing with silent reverence, retreated from the cabinet.

A quiet smile played on the features of the king as he disappeared, and a feeling of satisfaction more than usually dilated his heart, when he reflected, on the simplicity of the young soldier, and the cheapness with which he had escaped from the obligation, he was conscious he owed him.

“The pardon of a female vagrant, and of a moss-trooper, who fought on my own side, and the liberty of an old mad woman, all three points necessary to insure the execution of Master Carlton, and the reversion of his fief to the Crown—are very pretty coin to pay a petitioner with. I would that some of the nobles of my Court could be contented at so little cost. Sir William Stanley, for

example—it is the hour to give him audience, and I warrant he has some new demand to make ; for half my kingdom, I believe, could not content his ambition. But I shall be an over-match for him at last, so he had better not stretch the cord too tight."

With this reflection, the king arose, and exchanging his wrapping gown for a velvet mantle, he went forth to the chamber of audience.

Hubert in the mean while had returned direct to the apartment of Lord Clifford. The young nobleman had passed the time of his friend's absence in a state of the most extreme anxiety. Of the real character of Henry the Seventh, but little was at that time known, except his love of money ; and as Clifford was ignorant of Hubert's previous acquaintance with him, he had many fears as to the result of their interview. The smiling countenance of the young soldier, on his return, in a moment banished all his apprehensions, and extending his hand to

wards him, he congratulated him in the warmest manner.

“I have been received most graciously,” returned Hubert. “The king has been pleased to grant me my liberty, on condition that I employ it to collect the necessary evidence to bring Carlton to judgment ; and more than all my lord, I hold here two precious papers, which it has afforded me the most inexpressible gratification to obtain.”

“Ha ! a grant from the Crown, or a draft on the Exchequer ?” demanded his listener, with joyful astonishment.

“Neither the one, nor the other, but the royal pardon for two innocent persons, who stand every moment in imminent peril of arrest and execution.”

“And is that all he has given you ?” cried the nobleman, in a tone of disappointment.

“All !” echoed Hubert. “It is more than I had ever dared to hope. The life of two human beings, would under any circum-

stances be a precious boon ; but Marston Conyers, whose pardon I hold in my hand, is a brave and honest man, to whom I owe my own existence, and without poor Marion Sandford, a creature of no common mould, who is the sole witness of the murder of Sir Hugh Collingwood, Ellen would, long ere now, have been Carlton's wife."

" This is important," answered Lord Clifford, " know you where this woman is to be found ?"

" No efforts of mine shall be wanting to discover her, and now, when their names will be withdrawn from the list of the proscribed, and their seclusion shall no longer be necessary for their safety, I trust that we shall quickly meet."

" Pardon me, Master Saville," demanded Lord Clifford, " but has the king given you money ?"

" No, my Lord, but I have recently obtained a supply which renders such aid unnecessary, till the return of Sir Christopher Urswick decides my fate."

"Ellen has entrusted me with this purse, and begged I would place it in your hands," answered the nobleman, producing the deposit as he spoke. "I need scarcely add, she regards you at least as her brother, and cannot permit you to accept assistance from any one, save herself and the king."

"I fully appreciate her generosity," replied Hubert, "and I trust both she and you will understand my feelings, when I say, that I would rather die than consider myself her brother, even for an instant. I am poor, it is true, but by my own exertions I have hitherto struggled on, and I will do so to the last, my Lord. I will either win a position, where I can honorably demand the hand of the woman I love, without lowering her from the rank in which she was born, or I will resign her for ever. Never shall she be exposed to the humiliation of wedding the object of her charity, and if it be my lot to remain for ever a poor soldier, I will strive to support, with honor and content, the lot that Providence has assigned me."

" You are proud, Master Saville, but I admire your pride," said his host. " I, too, have travelled long through the shadow of affliction, and I have to thank my mother that I now enjoy the inestimable consciousness, that not the smallest act of ours was ever unworthy of our noble birth. No envious tongues can now relate aught to tarnish our recovered honors ; and I rejoice that you know equally, how to value the blessings of independence, and that honest industry which can disgrace no man. I now feel more than ever that you are worthy of the hand I have resigned, and with my soul I wish you every success in your generous combat with fortune, and whether you win the rights you claim, or remain a poor soldier, remember you may always count Clifford amongst the most sincere and faithful of your friends."

" My Lord, I am proud to do so," answered Hubert, holding forth his hand to his host, whilst his countenance glowed with the joy of a noble heart, that feels it is understood

and appreciated. "I cannot express to you," he added after a pause, "with what different feelings I leave you, my Lord, from those with which I entered here. The remembrance of your generosity can never be effaced from my heart, and even should misfortune henceforth pursue me, I shall never cease to remember with gratitude that you have done all in your power to insure my happiness. Should anything important occur, you will, I trust, permit me to inform you of it, and as my return to the palace might expose me to Carlton's observation, with your permission I will send you tidings of my proceedings from time to time, by Master Andrews, the jeweller, of Mincing Lane."

"I know him well, and shall not fail to visit him," answered Clifford.

"I must now proceed thither, and commence my task without further delay," was Hubert's reply, "and I shall be still farther indebted to your Lordship's kindness, if you will lend me a wide mantle to serve as a

disguise, for in this now broad day-light, it is necessary to guard against observation."

This desire was immediately complied with, and with repeated expressions of gratitude, Hubert almost immediately afterwards left the palace.

CHAPTER VII.

ON the afternoon of the day of Saville's interview with the king, two females in dusty riding suits, and so closely muffled in their large camelot hoods, that their faces were totally invisible, rode, accompanied by three well armed serving men, into the court-yard of an hostlery in Leadenhall Street. By the difficulty with which the tallest of the women dismounted from her horse, it was conjectured by the people of the Inn, that

she had passed the meridian of life, but the lesser sprang to the ground with the lightness of a fairy, to the aid of her companion, and more than one of the waiters around declared, after the two females ascended to an upper chamber, that as the wind blew her hood somewhat aside, he had caught a glimpse of the most marvellous pair of black eyes he had ever beheld.

Many were the conjectures as to the rank and character of these unknown travellers, but every attempt to extract any information from their attendants proving unavailing, the curious were obliged to be contented without discovering more, than that they spoke a northern dialect.

The women in the meanwhile, utterly unconscious of the attention they had excited, were no sooner left alone in their apartment, than the elder, hastily pushing back her hood, as if weary of such a constraint, turned to her companion and demanded if she still kept her resolution of forsaking her.

"We have passed many hours together," she said, "and I can ill reconcile it to my mind, that now, when we have arrived at the end of our difficulties, you should by this ill-timed separation, deprive me of the power to prove to you my gratitude, for all your zealous services, on which I had no claim, and which no other being could have rendered me."

"Such words as you now utter, are to me sufficient requital," returned the younger female, kissing, with affection and respect, the withered hand of the lady she addressed, "but I cannot tarry. My actions are not under my own command. To you, I trust, all danger is now past, and I will at length confess to you, that every minute of delay, my life is in peril, for Marion Sandford and Marston Conyers are both attainted ; he as a traitor, I as a heretic !"

"Impossible ! — he who raised for the Earl of Richmond a troop of five hundred men—he who has shed his blood in the

cause of Lancaster, and is ready at every moment to draw his sword for the king."

" Nevertheless it is true," returned Marion, for it was she. " Though he knew long ago, that the Queen Mother, who had vowed vengeance against him for the part she considered he had taken in the murder of her father, had by Carlton's aid, procured his condemnation to death ; no fear of arrest could prevent him making every effort to liberate you, his ancient protectress, from captivity. Happily he has proved successful. At my entreaty, he left us ere we reached London, to seek concealment in a place of safety, where it is now my intention to join him. He was my father's friend—he has been my protector, since my wretched parent's untimely death, and you, Lady Isabel, will not wonder, when I say, that I would sooner die than forsake him in the hour of adversity."

" Noble creature—few on earth are there like thee !" cried the lady, gazing with admiration on Marion, whose cheek had flushed, and whose eyes glistened with tears, as she

spoke. Cans't thou not at least tell me whither thou goest?"

"Impossible," she replied, "Conyers has bound me to secrecy, but if an occasion offers, and I dare, at some future time, to give you tidings of our existence, I will do so, if it interests you to know, that a creature so worthless, and so persecuted by fortune, still struggles amidst sorrows and trials on the face of the earth."

"Marion," answered Lady Isabel, severely, "have not I, too, had sorrows? has not the arrow been driven deeply to this heart, till the pang of the wound was almost past endurance? and yet, behold, now, when I have trodden on, in darkness and mourning, nearly to the brink of the grave, the angel of Hope has arisen, like the star of the morning, to shed a lustre even over my last hours. The bright things which for a quarter of a century, I have only beheld in my dreams, stand now almost like realities before me, and if it has pleased Heaven to spare Hubert, the hope which consoled my youth

may yet be fulfilled, and I may see, ere I am laid in the grave, the child of my first born inherit the domains of his fathers. Yet, I have despaired, Marion, even like thee ! and I have sat lonely in my sorrow, without sympathy, without love, till it appeared as if the darkness of the shadow of death had veiled all things earthly from my eyes, both present and to come !”

“ Alas, there can be no hope, save that of serving others for me ! my doom is spoken, my lot is fixed,” returned Marion, in a voice of such calm tranquillity, such resolute endurance of despair, that Lady Isabel felt that her words were truth ; yet after a pause, she said, “ Marion, whatever be that destiny, all who know you must confess, that you bear it as Christians are commanded to bear afflictions, and if the prayers of the widow avail aught at the throne of Mercy, thy reward will not be far distant. I would fain have kept thee with me till I discovered Hubert, to be a witness of the happiness thou hast done so

much to effect ; but be assured, that whenever I enjoy the rapture of beholding him, I shall not forget that without you, I should have remained Carlton's prisoner. Even my grand-daughter it seems, took little heed of my fate, whilst she was enjoying the pleasures of the Court."

"Judge not too severely, my Lady," answered Marion. "I cannot believe that she has failed to do all in her power for your liberation, but Carlton is in favor, they say, and women's words carry small weight with the king."

"I trust, for the sake of human nature, and the love I bore her, that thou art right," said the lady sternly, "but by the honor of my ancestors, however high the pinnacle of grace, to which that sycophant hath crawled, I yet will raise a storm about his ears, shall bring him down from his proud eminence, to crawl into a beggar's grave, dishonored and reviled. But should it prove, Marion, that your oath is necessary to

convict him of the murder of my son, I must know where I can send to summon you!"

"Alas, my lady, my oath is nothing worth, and Conyers now would be no more believed. To summon either of us, would be to expose us to certain death, but it would not insure the punishment of Carlton! be assured it would not. His gold is now omnipotent. Believe me, you must be contented, when Sir Christopher Urswick returns from France, if your grandson's claims to his inheritance can be established, without attempting to punish the criminal for the murder I saw him commit."

"Tell me, at least, Marion, when I may expect to have tidings of you?" cried the lady eagerly.

"When Conyers is beyond the reach of his enemies," she returned, "more I dare not promise."

"Surely if I take up my abode with Master Andrews the jeweller, there could be no more danger in your visiting me there,

than in entering this house, where so many strangers' eyes are upon us?"

Marion shook her head, but she answered not.

"My heart will feel a void without thee," continued Lady Isabel—"for thou art more than an ordinary woman, and sorrow hath made a bond and a sympathy between us, such as existeth rarely between the companions of early days, and rarer still, bindeth old age and youth together."

Marion took the hand of the lady in hers, and kissed it with a sad smile, as she ceased speaking.

"These are precious words, madam," she said, "they would be of high worth even from ordinary lips, to a desolate, excommunicated wanderer like poor Marion; but from one, whose lofty and noble nature I well know how to estimate, they are beyond all price! Ah, if you knew, how I have thirsted for love—for sympathy, during ten years! how my stricken heart hath pined in its own dark solitude, since the sun of hu-

man kindness seemed to deny to me alone its cheering light, you would be able to estimate my gratitude !”

“ But surely Conyers loves you, Marion ? ” demanded the lady, who gazed with renewed wonder on the fair being, who gave utterance to these passionate expressions of deep felt agony, such as she had never before heard her betray.

The cheeks of the maiden became suddenly of the deepest crimson, then more quickly the blood seemed to rush to her heart, and she stood pale as a corpse, and motionless, save that her lips quivered, as without raising her eyes from the ground, she replied—

“ Master Conyers has protected me, when all others spurned me ; he has never forgotten that he was my father’s friend ! but he is not a man to breathe words of tenderness in the ear of a woman, whom the law hath pronounced a criminal ! ”

“ He is a brave and gallant soldier,”

answered Lady Isabel with a slight touch of severity in her tone.

" And as such I respect him," returned Marion with recovered tranquillity. " His home, has been my home, during long years, when the world abandoned me ; and now when his path is beset with dangers, it is my turn to watch over him. Save for this duty, Lady Isabel, I would at every risk have remained, to share your fortunes. But methinks, as Master Andrews resides at no great distance, he will be quickly here in answer to your summons, and I must depart ere he arrives."

" Marion tarry for one instant," cried the lady in hurried accents. " Think not I wish to pay you for the services you have rendered me ; they are beyond all price—but money is necessary in this great city. Conyers is in difficulty and will have need of gold ; this small sum is all I have, till Master Andrews replenishes my purse, and I pray you tarry, till, that done, I can give

you enough to provide for the immediate necessities of my brave Captain. It is no favour—it is his right ; a sum due to him as commander of the troop he raised for my service, and you must tarry to receive it."

" I could not, Lady, were it ten times the sum, and our necessities as often multiplied, I would not meet the jeweller, for the wealth of the crown."

" You know him then ?"

" Ah, my Lady, this is no hour to tell you my wretched history," returned Marion with sad solemnity. " Forget me—I pray you forget, that such a melancholy being ever crossed your path ; a creature too humble, to be worthy, either of the curiosity, or of the generous interest you have shewn her. Remember me only, if a time comes, when even by my death, I can serve you ; till then farewell," so saying, ere Lady Isabel was aware of her purpose, she bent down and kissed her hand, and then hastily turning away moved rapidly towards the door.

" Marion," cried the lady, " you cannot

thus depart! you must at least carry this small sum to Master Conyers. I offer it, not to you, therefore you have no right to refuse it ; expend it for your wants, till I find means to send him a further remittance," and she placed the purse in the hands of the maiden. " Tell him from me, that though it may be a merit in you, faithfully to guard the secret he has confided to your keeping, I shall consider him wanting in the duty he owes an old and long tried friend, if he fail to inform me of his abode, or to apply to me, whenever he has need of my assistance. Repeat these messages faithfully, and I trust we shall meet again before long. Farewell!"

This last sad word, so affecting at all times, but doubly so, when uttered by those who feel they are parting to encounter dangers and perhaps even death ; that they are leaving for ever, a dear and valued friend, to plunge amidst the harsh jar of an unsympathizing world,—this word of good augury, yet evil import, was only faintly audible

from Marion's trembling lips, as she received, without further resistance, the proffered gift of her benefactress, and drawing her hood still closer than before around her face, she glided like a shadow from the room.

She had scarcely closed the door behind her, when she heard heavy steps ascending the stairs. She hesitated for a moment, whether she should stand aside, in order, if possible, to escape the observation of the person who approached, or pass on with a light quick step, and trust for concealment to her muffled garments. A short consideration convinced her that the last was the better plan ; and she pursued her way without apparent hesitation, along the open gallery, that passed round the first story of the building.

She half repented this resolution, when, on reaching the top of the stairs leading to the court beneath, she recognized the jeweller, Master Andrews, who was slowly toiling up the steep ascent. He was much changed since she had seen him last. Though

still healthy and robust, he was stouter, and less active, and time had imprinted visible traces on his person. Yet she knew him at a glance.

For some mysterious reason, she trembled from head to foot when she felt his eyes were upon her ; but she did not lose her presence of mind ; she gathered the folds of her hood still closer round her face, and glided forward, at the same rapid pace as before. But just as she was about to pass the portly citizen, owing to the narrowness of the wooden stairs, and a current of air blowing from the wide gateway of the court, a part of her dress caught on a projecting nail, and for a moment arrested her progress.

With sudden jerk, she strove to liberate herself, but her first effort failed, and only served to arrest the attention of the citizen, who retreating a step, stood almost directly in front of her. In making a second attempt to release her dress, she in her eagerness to be free, for a moment incautiously let go the

folds of her hood, and scarcely had the wind raised it from her forehead, ere she was made aware of the imprudence by a sudden exclamation of Master Andrews. Drawing it down with the utmost rapidity, she darted past him, and disappeared under the gateway beneath, almost before he could turn round his unwieldy person, to observe her movements.

Well aware of his own incapacity to pursue her, he stood gazing after her for a few moments, without making any effort to move, till a servant observing his hesitation, demanded if he should show him the way to the lady's chamber.

When the citizen entered the apartment of Lady Isabel, he advanced and kissed her hand with the most profound respect, expressing his delight and surprise that she had been able to effect her escape, and travel to London alone.

"Not alone," she replied. "Conyers and a mysterious being, who has long been the companion of his banishment, by a cunning

device procured my liberation from Carlton's power, and the latter has been my companion even to this chamber."

"Ha!" exclaimed the jeweller, with amazement. "A new light breaks upon my mind. Hath this person left you long?"

"Not five minutes."

"And she is young and fair?"

"Her beauty is remarkable," was the reply.

"And she is the daughter of Conyers, or his wife?"

"No man knows. For ten years disguised as a boy, it is said, she has enjoyed his hospitality. Yet no stain attaches to her fame. The people in those wild districts, adore her as a saint, for wherever sorrow existed, she was there to comfort it; wherever want complained, she was there to minister to it, and amidst misfortune she ever hovered like a guardian angel around, seeking to succour and relieve."

"She is—she must be my brother's child!" exclaimed Andrews, whilst his agitated fea-

tures, to the astonishment of his hostess, betrayed the most intense emotion. “Lady, know you if she was accused of heresy, if her father was burnt on Tower Hill?”

“Both hath she confessed to me,” answered Lady Isabel, “though not the king himself can be a better Catholic.”

“This was Carlton’s work!” returned the citizen bitterly. “When all this happened, I was absent at Venice in the pursuit of my trade, and after my return, I vainly sought to obtain any traces of my lost niece.”

“That is strange,” said the lady, “for Father Urswick is the friend of Conyers, and must have known the story of his companion.”

“Less so than it appears,” was the old man’s reply. “I had only visited England for a short time, after a lapse of many years, about six months before my brother’s misfortunes, and finding on my subsequent return from Italy, that ruin attached even to his name, I assumed that of Andrews. None tried to remember our relationship, and thus

disguised, I was obliged to pursue all my enquiries after my niece, with the utmost caution. I have known Sir Christopher Urswick, only under my assumed name, and never ventured to apply to so pious a priest, to aid my researches for a condemned heretic. Heaven, however, it seems hath favoured my wishes, and I dare at length to hope, that my brother's long persecuted child, may be restored to me, to be a daughter to me in my old age."

"Alas, Master Andrews, I can give you little comfort," said his hostess. "Marion has departed I know not whither, and we may never meet again. Conyers stands on the list of traitors, and she considers it her duty to share his fortunes. Had you come only five minutes sooner!"

"Five minutes," cried the old man sadly! "It is ever thus! we take no heed of time as it flies, and yet how often, would this little space, suffice to turn aside the shaft of death, to snatch the despairing from ruin, and change the whole fortunes of the fu-

ture. Five minutes—and I had clasped my brother's child in my arms, I should have discovered the hiding place of Conyers, and relieved him from all apprehension, by the assurance that Father Urswick has written to the King to demand his pardon. Now both may perish, or fly to foreign lands for security, where all trace of them will be lost to me for ever."

"Patience, Master Andrews, patience ! For twenty years have I sat down in sorrow and wept ; and yet the cloud is lifted from the horizon, ere the sun hath set for ever, and though my path is now short, a glory has arisen between me and the tomb. Though my son Reginald may sleep in an unknown grave, his child I trust survives—yes, even his son, to inherit the name and honours of his ancestors, and transmit them to other generations."

"Ha, Lady Isabel ! have you likewise heard the young man's tale ?" eagerly demanded the citizen.

"What do you mean ? of whom do you

speak ?” inquired the lady, her eyes flashing with that wild expression, which in former years had led to the fatal belief of her insanity.

“ Of Master Hubert Saville !” said the citizen gravely.

“ What know you of Hubert ?” cried his listener. “ Has he survived the battle of Bosworth ? can you give me tidings of him ? can you assure me that he lives ? ”

“ Yes, madam, he lives,” he replied, “ but his present position is one of danger, and if you really take an interest in his welfare, it is well you have arrived to intercede with the king for his life. By Carlton’s accusation, he was yesterday arrested for the murder of your son, Sir Hugh Collingwood, and is at present confined in the Tower.”

“ By the mass, you say well !” cried the lady, giving way to one of those stormy bursts of passion, which invested her person whilst they lasted, with solemn grandeur, “ the thunder shall be hurled back against the villain’s head ; and he who has struck

down the children of the widow, shall himself grovel in the dust before her vengeance. He, the false accuser, was my son's assassin—and Marion was the witness of the deed. I will to the king without delay ! I will strip the coward of his lion's hide, and not only rescue Hubert from an unjust death, but invest him, as the rightful heir, with Carlton's lands, for he is the son of my lost Reginald—he is the hope of my old age, he is the child, for whom, in tears and mourning, I wailed for long years, whilst others found peace in the grave ! He is the sole male survivor of the name of Collingwood and rightful inheritor of the lands his father lived not to enjoy."

"Lady have you proofs of this?" demanded the jeweller calmly, for the man of business, unused to such excitement, dreaded lest the lady, by her impetuosity, might rather injure, than advance, the cause of him she was anxious to serve.

"I know it!" she cried, as wildly as before.
"My grand-daughter and Marion have found

scraps of letters, which have no other interpretation, and prove that Sir Christopher Urswick can elucidate the whole mystery."

"He is in Paris," was the response, "and the King is not a man to accept surmises as proof, when property is at stake. He will no doubt be more likely to punish Master Carlton, when he expects his lands to revert to the crown, than if he knew of the existence of an heir, and if you will take my advice, you will say nothing of Hubert's claims, till Father Urswick's return. Rescue him from the immediate danger in which he is placed, and his rights can be demanded at a more convenient opportunity."

Lady Isabel answered not. Lost in thought, she remained for several minutes with her head leaning on her hand, and the jeweller forbore to interrupt her meditations. He was thinking of his lost niece, of the brother who had been the playmate of his childhood, and of his cruel death, and when his hostess at length looked up, his eyes were moist with tears.

"Marion must be found, Master Andrews," she said, at once interpreting his thoughts, "both for her own sake, and Hubert's; she must be found."

"And Hubert shall be saved," was his reply. "But first of all my lady, you must leave this Inn. Our meetings here are too much exposed to observation, and there are spies abroad, from whom it were well to conceal your arrival and our movements as much as possible."

"Can you receive me, Master Andrews? I feel as you do, that even my granddaughter must remain ignorant of my abode."

"There is a chamber in my house, at your service," answered the citizen, "and you will confer both honour and pleasure on your old acquaintance, and humble servant, if you will condescend to accompany me thither."

"You must first pay and dismiss the men, whom Conyers sent with me as a guard," was the reply.

"I will send to settle all their demands," said Andrews. "Even they must have no trace whither you remove."

"You are a wise man, and I have long had reason to confide in your prudence," returned Lady Isabel arising, and gathering her mantle around her. "Wherever you are pleased to conduct me, I am ready to go. But I warn you, I am resolved to proceed to the Palace ere the day is over, and obtain an interview with the king. No arguments shall convince me, that it is expedient to leave Master Hubert's life in danger, a moment longer than is absolutely requisite."

"No strangers can obtain admission to his Majesty, till after two o'clock," was the reply. "In the interval, I can promise you tidings of Master Saville, for I have sent my apprentice to the prison, and he will no doubt quickly return."

"If this be certain, let us no more delay," said the lady. "I like not this public dwelling, where the whole world has a right to enter. I have lived so long alone, Master

Andrews, that this busy crowd oppresses my soul, as if it had passed suddenly to purgatory, where the restless spirits, impatient of their doom, are ever flitting to and fro, in idle struggles to escape the doom, they know their deeds have merited. Cities are no dwelling places for those, who have passed their life amongst the mountains, who for years have heard nought but the wind rushing over the silent snow, the fall of waters, the hum of the bee amongst the heather, or the song of the lark in the cloudless sky. Such sounds have power to soothe the troubled breast, and raise the soul from earth to heaven ; but my heart sickens at the din of passionate strife, in this dark, stifling air ; at the sight of the worn and weary faces, that throng the streets in pursuit of gain, or empty pleasure, and of the poor wretches, who, with the form of men, rise scarcely superior to famished dogs, which crawl about in search of food, and pick a vile and scanty nourishment from the waste and wantonness of the rich. If I can find seclusion

in your dwelling, let us go thither instantly."

Master Andrews needed no second command from the lady, for he too was not without anxiety, as to the effect of the vicissitudes she had lately undergone, and after making the necessary arrangements, he quickly announced his readiness to depart.

CHAPTER VIII.

NOT a word was spoken by Lady Isabel, as leaning on the arm of the jeweller, she walked as rapidly as her age permitted, along the crowded streets. The strangeness of her attire, which was of a fashion worn more than thirty years before, drew the eye of every passenger upon her meagre and extraordinary person ; but unconscious of the attention she excited, dreams were meanwhile flitting through her mind, of the days

when she rode there, in all the pride of youth and beauty, and noble birth, in the train of Margaret of Anjou, ere her wretched marriage had withered the hopes of her joyous heart, or planted an arrow there, whose wound still rankled deeply.

For a moment, she felt as if it had been the event of yesterday ; and then, the dark abyss that lay between her and those brief hours of happiness, seemed to open, and she saw, at one glance, all the terrible events, and sad remembrances, that had harassed her brain since then—even to the very brink of madness ; and, she was conscious, with a shudder, that Time, in his flight, had shed his withering poison on the head of the gay hearted girl, till joy, and hope, and beauty, had, one by one, deserted her ; and, she now stood blighted, feeble, and old, upon the brink of the grave.

Immersed in such sad reflections, she arrived at the jeweller's door, and her satis-

faction was great, to find that he occupied a dwelling so unostentatious.

The chamber whither her host conducted her, looked out into a small garden at the back, where the noises of the city were scarcely audible ; and, as she glanced around on this simple, but tranquil asylum, she pressed the hand of the worthy man in hers, with looks of silent gratitude.

“ Here is peace for the senses, if not for the soul,” she said. “ Heavenly messenger ! we scorn thee, Peace, in the days of our youth, but we learn, long ere the grave has closed upon our troubles, that thou only art worthy of our pursuit, upon the face of the earth,” and she knelt down before a picture of the virgin, that hung against the wall, and, for a while, was lost in silent prayer.

The jeweller left the chamber during her devotions, but when she again arose, she saw that he had returned. But he was no longer

calm and placid, as when she last saw him ; his countenance bespoke him full of trouble and uneasiness.

The change which had come over him was too great not to be instantly remarked by Lady Isabel, but her courage failed not.

“ Master Andrews,” she said, “ I perceive your messenger has brought evil tidings, but I am now prepared, and I trust can support with the patience befitting a devout Christian, whatever trial it pleases Heaven to send upon me. Ha ! you are silent still ! then I know there is nothing more to hope for Hubert.”

“ Alas, my Lady,” answered the old man, in mournful accents, “ I fear there hath been foul play, and that all our efforts to serve him, may prove to be too late.”

“ Angels of mercy, they have not murdered him !” exclaimed the lady, starting forward, and forgetful of all her assumed composure, she seized the hand of Andrews in hers with a wild expression of despair and agony, such as the old man could not endure to look

upon, and he turned away his head and wept."

"Dead—dead—" she cried. "I knew it ! I knew that it must be so ! I knew that it was worse than madness to hope that even a shadow of happiness awaited me upon earth. Poor boy ! why could they not take a feeble, worn out wretch, like me, and leave thee, yet a little while, whilst the light of youth was upon thee ? But I envy thee ! thou art gone to rejoin thy father, whilst I, in solitude, must still drag on the weary chain of life, that holds me from him."

She sunk back in a chair ; she hid her face in her hands, but she did not weep. Her tears had long ceased to flow.

"I must hear the worst, Master Andrews," she said, after a long pause. "However dreadful it may be, it is better to know the reality, than to endure the fearful images imagination brings before me. Have they murdered him in cold blood, or killed him by some cruel form of law ?"

"We know little," answered her host, "but this is certain, that I witnessed his arrest yesterday, and yet, when my servant made inquiries for him this morning, he was told, there was no such person in the prison."

"Perchance he has been liberated," cried Lady Isabel, whilst a wild light of joy flashed in her deep dark eyes.

"I dare not hope it. After what has passed, it appears impossible he should be set free, without being brought to trial; whilst it is well known, that Apsley, the gaoler, is a sordid man, who, for gold was ever ready to do the pleasure of the late king, or his confidant, Master Carlton. Many, since he kept the prison keys, have entered it as a tomb, where they were for ever buried in oblivion."

"And yet, the new king hath left him in his office!" cried his appalled listener.

"Money — money — money," was the citizen's sole reply.

"I too have money?" exclaimed the lady,

starting from her seat. “I will to the king without another moment’s delay. Bring me my jewels, Master Andrews, which have so long been in your keeping. I preserved them for my son, and my son’s son, but if both have perished, they cannot be more fitly employed, than to purchase vengeance on the head of their destroyer. Bring me my jewels, I say, I will to the king. I will lay them at his feet. Nay, I will pile upon them all the gold that I have gathered for long years, to grace my son’s return—nay, not a shilling that I own will I retain, for I need naught on earth but vengeance ; and if for others, money is omnipotent, it surely will suffice to win the boon I covet. Tarry not—answer me not—my ear is deaf to all objections—bring me my jewels, Master Andrews, I command you ! every moment of delay but frets my troubled spirit into madness.”

The honest citizen indeed saw, that it was no moment to make answer or objection. He had already foreseen the course the lady was

likely to pursue, for he had been too long acquainted with her sensitive, and passionate nature, to expect that she would remain tranquil, under the sense of the fearful wrong that had been done her. Still, he did not approve of her purpose. Well acquainted with the intrigues of the Court, he felt assured, that if skilfully pursued, her object might be obtained without any personal sacrifice on her part, and he was one who daily saw too much wealth fall into the coffers of the king, not to feel, that his position was sufficient, without offering any needless contributions to his avarice.

“Happen what may,” he muttered to himself, as he left the chamber, “I must send for her grand-daughter, and moreover, I will tarry as long as possible, in seeking her treasures in my iron chest. Women are feeble, they say, and who knows, if I can delay till her passion hath somewhat abated —who knows but the sight of the heir-looms of her family may make her waver in her resolution, and preserve them from the

grasping hand of the king, to grace her own fair grand-child."

Whilst all this was passing in the old man's mind, he had lighted a small lantern in his own chamber, and proceeded thence unseen by any human being, to the ground floor of his dwelling. Then passing the open part of his small garden, he disappeared behind a clump of stunted trees, which screened all beyond them from the view. From an arched fountain at the further end of a shaded alley, rushed a copious stream of water, but the citizen turning a tap concealed amidst the artificial rock, over which it fell, it immediately ceased to flow, and left disclosed, a dark low passage behind, of which no one could previously have entertained the slightest suspicion.

Andrews stepped over the basin of the fountain, and having unlocked a door within the cavity beyond, again put the waters in motion, and proceeded, by the light of his lantern, to advance about a dozen steps further, where a second door again interrupted

his progress. This, likewise, he quickly opened, and entered a little, low, arched vault, constructed several hundred years before, for the same purpose to which Master Andrews now applied it—the concealment of treasure.*

For a moment, the citizen looked around with a feeling of satisfaction at the gold and jewels he had placed there, till able to employ them to advantage in a foreign loan ; then hastily taking up the tin case, containing the property of Lady Isabel, he left the cell. Strongly securing the doors, he repassed the fountain, and left the water rushing like a veil before the mysteries of his precious treasure-house.

Lady Isabel had continued to pace her chamber during the whole time of his absence, with the utmost impatience, and no sooner did she behold him return, than starting

* A fountain of a nearly similar character, now actually exists in one of the houses in Queen's Square.

forward, she snatched the case he carried from his hands, and placing it on the table, she endeavoured to unclose its fastenings, but she trembled too violently ; she was obliged to yield the key to the jeweller, who, in silence, understood and obeyed her wishes, by promptly opening the antique casket.

Anxiously did he watch her countenance, as she gazed upon the brilliant chain of diamonds that first met her view. But there was no change to be seen there ! she lifted them out, and cast them aside on the table, as if they had been dust and ashes. They had been a gift from her husband, who had cursed her first-born son, and they had no value in her eyes. Then followed a precious head dress of pearls and emeralds, but that too she put away with equal indifference.

“ Must this too go to the king ? ” inquired Master Andrews, venturing to take a single brilliant ring from the box, in an ancient and most elaborate setting.

“It was my father’s” murmured the lady, heaving unconsciously a deep sigh, as she took it from his hands. “It was a gift from Henry the Fifth, in return for his gallant services in the battle of Agincourt. It was a splendid type of honor, and I once hoped to live to place it on the finger of my son, or my son’s son. But they are gone—and like all things else on earth, it has lost its value in my sight. Master Carlton risked his life to rob me of these gems, but by God’s blessing he failed, and I have preserved them as a price for his head! I will forget the past, and the proud associations, that in other days, lent a double value to every jewel that box contains. All are alike vanity, and nothing now remains for me but vengeance. I will look at them no more, and this only will I keep,” she added, taking a small medallion from the treasure, and pressing it eagerly to her lips. “Look at it, Master Andrews,” she added, at length holding it forth towards her host, “such was

my son Reginald, when the curse of his father drove him for ever from my arms, and such was Hubert, when I last beheld him."

"The resemblance to Master Saville is indeed striking," answered the citizen, after he had gazed for a minute on the picture.

"For years I wept over the fading image, till I sometimes fancied that my senses wandered," continued Lady Isabel, without appearing to notice his last words, "but I hoped then! I believed that a task yet remained for me to fulfil upon earth, and by a strong effort, I resolved to look on it no more. I put it from me—and for ten years, it hath been in your custody. But the trial is now past!—the father and the child have alike ceased to exist, and this poor shadow of those I loved, shall accompany me henceforward even to the grave."

"Hark! my lady, hark!" cried Andrews, hastily springing up, and throwing the jewels

in confusion into the box. "There is a loud knocking at the gate. These precious gems must not be seen in my poor dwelling."

"No one will enter here," was the lady's calm reply.

"Who knows—who knows," muttered the citizen, still pursuing his task, "truly there are heavy steps in the entry below—some one is mounting hither! quick! quick! Lady Isabel, the key! But ere the good man could secure the treasure as he desired, to his utter consternation and amazement, the door of the chamber was thrown open, and a cavalier with a flapped hat and feather, and a mantle so gathered about his neck as almost entirely to conceal his features, made one step across the threshold; then suddenly starting back with surprise, he uttered a short exclamation of joyful astonishment, and casting away his disguise, rushed with extended arms towards Lady Isabel, and fell on one knee before her.

"Master Hubert! can it be possible?" cried the jeweller, but the lady spoke not.

She endeavoured to rise, but as if turned to marble, her limbs refused their office. Her lips moved, but no sound came forth, and her hands which Hubert grasped in his, were icy cold. For some moments, she gazed at him with wild inquiring eyes, and then her head dropped upon his shoulder, and she lay as still as a corpse in its shroud.

Hubert moved not—spoke not; he scarcely dared to breathe, and the jeweller, who was aware of the terrible conflict of feelings, she had that morning undergone, and how ill her already exhausted frame was prepared to support such an unlooked for transition from despair to joy, hung over them with speechless solicitude; for he felt it was a crisis, on which the intellects, and in all probability, the life itself of the lady depended.

To Hubert, this was a fearful pause, and he was more than once apprehensive, that the spirit had already departed, and that a

corpse lay in his arms. But, at length, she sighed deeply, and, with a joy, such as he had rarely, in his life, experienced—he felt her warm tears falling rapidly on his neck.

“She weeps,” he murmured, in a low voice ; “and all will be well.”

“Thank heaven !” returned the citizen, “her tears are a most precious unction, that have rescued her from death, or insanity. We had reason to believe you dead, Master Saville, and thence, your sudden appearance, awoke this violent emotion. But the worst is past, and, I am truly thankful you arrived, ere she had departed to the palace, to purchase, with all her treasure, the punishment of your supposed murderer. Another five minutes, and it would have been too late !”

“What, could have given rise to such ideas ?” demanded Hubert, eagerly.

“We learnt this morning. that you were no longer in the prison ; and the porter made my apprentice understand, that he need give

himself no further trouble about you, as it was rumoured you had died in the night—which has happened to many ere now, within those walls."

" My precious boy ! the child of my first born !" murmured Lady Isabel, in broken accents ; at length, raising her head from his shoulder, " by what miracle, hast thou been preserved to me ?"

" I owe my liberty, to the generosity of the king," answered Hubert, simply.

" The saints reward him," she replied. " Oh Hubert, my heart is full—too full for words, or I would tell you much of my long sufferings, since we parted—of my hopes in my lone prison—and of my despair."

" Dearest lady, we will think now, only of joy," said the youth. " His majesty, convinced of my innocence, has resolved to bring Carlton to justice ; and, in the silence of the night, sent Lord Clifford to conduct me to the palace. This morning, I was honoured by an interview ; and, in answer

to my petition, he has promised to take prompt measures for your release, from the fearful captivity in which you have so long been held. But, I am overjoyed to find that the interference of his authority, is no longer necessary to procure your liberty."

"No! I owe that to Conyers and Marion," said the lady. "Strangers came to my rescue, whilst my own grand-daughter—though in the service of the Princess Elizabeth, and basking in the sunshine of the court, left me unheeded, to wear out my miserable days in sorrow, and captivity.

"Pardon me, but there you judge too harshly," returned Hubert. "Ellen has even incurred the displeasure of the king, by the ceaseless efforts she has made for your liberation; but, for a while, Master Carlton was omnipotent. His majesty had need of him—and, even your liberty could not be granted at the risk of losing his services. His majesty has done with him—

and his day of punishment is rapidly approaching."

"Ah, such my child, are courts," returned the lady, sorrowfully. "Such were they in my youth—and, such will they remain, until the end of time. The sycophant, the hypocrite, the tool, hath his hour of golden service; but, let him take heed, when he has gathered his honey, lest the spoiler, who has watched his labour with envy, seizeth not the hoard he has sacrificed all to win."

"And, he richly deserves the punishment, when it falls upon him," said the jeweller, drily; "so no more of that—I presume, my lady, you have, now, given up all idea of going with your jewels to the king; and, I cannot do better, than pack them up as they were before."

"Yes, my good friend, and Heaven be praised, that I have preserved them to this hour. I am repaid for all the combats it has cost me to retain them, since I

can, now, hope to bestow them on my rightful heir."

" Marion has, then, told you all my wild expectations ?" inquired Hubert.

" I have now heard, and seen enough," said Lady Isabel, " to convince me, even without Father Urswick's evidence, that thou art the son of my lost Reginald ; and, as such, I clasp thee proudly to my heart," and she pressed the young man with the affection of a mother in her arms.

Hubert warmly returned her embrace—for, even had no relationship existed between them, the kindness she had shown him from childhood, had attached him to her by many tender associations.

When her feelings where somewhat more composed, his first inquiries were for Marion, and, he was shocked beyond measure, to learn, that she had so recently departed, without leaving any trace, by which her asylum might be discovered ; which, Lady Isabel and Andrews doubly lamented, when he produced

the royal pardon bestowed on him by the king.

“ For the assurance of their happiness and ours,” said the young man, “ nothing remains wanting, but the discovery of their hiding place ; and, to accomplish that, my utmost efforts shall be exerted.”

Andrews now, more than ever, anxious to recover his lost niece, loudly expressed the same resolution—though neither knew, in what manner to commence a search—on the success of which, depended such important results.

Though Hubert was anxious to return at once into the city, and commence his task, Lady Isabel would not consent to his leaving the house, till the shades of evening lessened the danger of his being recognized. The remaining hours of the day flew rapidly, as they mutually related the events which had befallen them, since their separation. The lady’s transient irritation against her granddaughter, was quickly appeased by Hubert’s explanations ; and, when the departure of

the young man left her again alone, the brightest anticipations replaced the sombre thoughts that thronged her mind, when she, that morning, entered the dwelling of the jeweller.

CHAPTER IX.

LORD Clifford failed not to inform Ellen of the favorable reception given to Master Saville by the king, and of the pardons he had granted for Conyers and Marion. As time passed on, he, likewise, gave to her, at intervals, information of his proceedings, which he received from the jeweller. Nevertheless, her anxiety for his safety was extreme.

Had she known that the gaoler, Apsley, to make sure of his reward, had persuaded Carlton of Hubert's death, her apprehensions of danger, would have been lessened. But, ignorant of this, when she heard that the ex-secretary appeared to be higher than ever, in the good graces of the king, the worst presentiments, again took possession of her mind.

More than one circumstance contributed to increase her uneasiness on Hubert's account. Although Lord Clifford continued to be regarded as her affianced lover, the visits of Carlton became more frequent to the apartments of the Princess—where he was sure, at all times, of a gracious reception from the Queen Dowager—and, whenever an opportunity offered, he failed not to renew his former attentions to Ellen.

Once, and once only, the arrest of Hubert was alluded to in her presence—and, the triumphant expression of Carlton's satanic countenance, whilst he glanced towards her,

and certain words he murmured—audible to no other ear but hers—awakened the most terrible apprehensions in her mind.

In fact, Carlton, fully persuaded that Hubert, was for ever removed from his path, and deceived by the assumed graciousness of the king, resolved, at all hazards, to make another attempt to obtain the hand of Ellen. Her engagement to Lord Clifford—whom he regarded as an inexperienced boy—he esteemed a slight obstacle to the accomplishment of his wishes, and encouraged by the Queen Dowager, he felt little doubt of ultimate success.

The more he saw the power of money in the court, the more steadily he pursued his purpose, till emboldened by the favour of the King, he presumed at length to hint, that having strong reasons to suspect the loyalty of a nobleman high in authority about his Majesty's person, he only waited his royal approbation to pursue researches, which must terminate in the trial and condemna-

tion of several rich members of the Peerage, who had formerly been partisans of the House of York.

Henry received his mysterious disclosures with the utmost condescension, and when Carlton even ventured to insinuate, that the hand of Mistress Ellen Collingwood, was the only reward he should expect for such dangerous service, he was led to believe, that his majesty would not hesitate to break his engagements with Lord Clifford, to reward so zealous an adherent.

This unexpected tide of prosperity, failed not to produce its ordinary effect on his mind. Rendered audacious by security, he proceeded with less caution ; his insolence to his inferiors became insupportable, and forgetting his long feigned servility, his manner to Lord Clifford, and even to Ellen herself, was assured and presuming.

His destined victim, quickly learnt from the Princess Elizabeth, the new hope this unprincipled suitor had formed, and the promises which he boasted to the Queen

Dowager he had obtained from the King ; and though her royal mistress, and old Lady Clifford strove in every way to console her, neither could offer her counsel, or assistance which appeared likely to avail her in such an emergency. The king, she knew, regarded her with no favourable eye ; he considered her the favourite of the Princess Elizabeth, and forgot not, that her father had been a zealous partisan of the House of York—both circumstances which amounted almost to crimes in the eyes of his majesty, and she was fatally aware that to make any appeal to him, on such a subject, was utterly in vain.

More than a week had elapsed since she last received tidings of Hubert, when, with a heart oppressed with care, she accompanied the Princess Elizabeth, with only a few attendants, to hear vespers in the Cathedral of St. Paul

The light of day no longer pierced amidst the solemn aisles of the Church, when they entered it, nor did the lamps, nor tapers

burning before the altars, suffice to dispel the darkness from many of its gloomy recesses.

It was at a side chapel, that the royal devotee offered up her prayers ; but though Ellen knelt behind her, her mind, that evening, wandered perpetually from her devotions. More than once in the Church, under similar circumstances, she had felt convinced that Hubert watched her from a distant part of the building ; and that evening, though he was carefully disguised, she doubted not that it was he, and he alone, who, half concealed behind an ancient tomb, kept his dark eyes perpetually fixed upon her.

When the Princess arose, this figure had disappeared, and with a feeling of disappointment, Ellen had glided after her mistress nearly to the side door of the Church, when in passing a massive pillar, she felt a slight jerk at the corner of her mantle. She turned quickly, and almost ere she knew that Hubert was at her side, he had slipped a

folded paper into her hand, and again disappeared into the surrounding gloom.

Her agitation was so great, that for a moment she forgot the necessity of her keeping up with the other ladies in attendance. Fortunately the delivery of the letter, and her start of surprise had escaped their observation, and recalled to her presence of mind by their looking round in search of her, she quickened her steps, and by a slight excuse avoided all suspicion.

But her own heart could not thus be stilled. The paper held in her hand, seemed to agitate, by its touch, every fibre of her frame, and each moment appeared an hour, till she regained her home. Fortunately her duties for the evening were then concluded, or curiosity must have been excited by her distracted manner. One wild conjecture after another, as to the meaning of Hubert's conduct, flashed through her mind, until she reached her own chamber, and there, hastily dismissing her attendant, she tore open the letter, and eagerly perused its contents ; the

sole words she found therein were, “Courage Ellen! courage! Be constant and true! to-morrow will decide our destiny.”

When Marion escaped from the hostelry in Leadenhall street, and the unwelcome observations of Master Andrews, she continued her rapid flight without intermission along several narrow streets, scarcely daring to glance behind her, though she heard no steps in pursuit, and rarely met a human being in the miserable neighbourhood through which she passed.

At length, even she, light footed and agile as she was, was obliged to pause for breath. Assured that not a creature was near, she was again about to renew her way, with the same rapidity as before, when she was startled by the sudden appearance of a man in the garb of a sailor, from a low cellar, to which a flight of steps led through a trap door, only a few yards before her.

Marion at one glance recognized him, in spite of his change of attire, as one of the outlaws, whom she had formerly known in

Redesdale ; a man in whom Conyers placed no confidence, and who long celebrated as a daring and dexterous robber, she knew was suspected of being employed by Carlton, both in the attack on Lady Isabel's house, and the enlisting of troops, when Conyers failed to fulfil the wishes of the Secretary. She would gladly have escaped from a rencontre with Will Ainsley, as this fellow was called, but as she turned to fly in an opposite direction, he seized her by the skirt of her kirtle, with a harsh laugh, and then placed himself directly in her path.

"Ha ! ha ! mistress," he said, "whither away so fast ? there is no one at your heels, that I can see, though by the saints, so fair a damsel were worth catching !"

Marion was somewhat consoled to find by these words, that she was not recognized in female attire, and trusting she might thus escape, she again attempted to resume her way, without making any reply. But the man resolved not to lose sight of her so

quickly, kept pace with her, as she proceeded along the narrow street.

"By the mass, thou art nimble of foot," he said, at length laying his hand on her arm. "But this exercise is too much for me, and truly it is a pity such a pretty damsel, should be pacing the cold streets, instead of treading a measure with a gallant this fête day, when all the world are amusing themselves. Wilt thou not return with me to yonder public, I have just left. I warrant thou shalt have no cause to repent it, for though I wear a sailor's jacket my pockets are well lined with cash, and I can better pay for thy good cheer, than many a noble who has purchased his head at the price of his estates. I learnt dancing from the French Popinjays, when I went, a youth, with the Earl of Warwick to the French Court, and to judge by thy steps, I should guess thou hadst taken lessons in the same school. Caust thou not answer me, girl! By the Calendar, I think I make thee no bad

proposition, this cold afternoon. A cup of sack in a warm chimney corner, and a merry companion to boot—answer me—art thou willing? yes or no!"

"I thank you," returned Marion, at length worn out by his importunities, "but I have other business in hand."

"So it seems!" said the sailor in a half offended tone, "but nevertheless, I am resolved to have a full look at thy face before we part," and ere Marion was aware of his intention, he had pulled back her hood with a sudden jerk, so as to leave her whole head fully exposed to view. "Ha! ha! methinks we are old acquaintances," he cried, as he placed himself in such a position as directly to arrest her progress. "I need not ask where we have met before, when I look on those glorious eyes, and the lustre of that jet black hair. So! thou hast put on female garments, more easily to escape with Master Conyers; now, when in spite of all his prudence, his name figures amongst the condemned; or was was thy other garb, only a

disguise to protect thy beauty and innocence, from the rude freebooters' licentious eyes and tongues. By thy blushes, I will be sworn, the latter was the fact, and Marston Conyers was a more cunning fellow than we took him for."

"Master Conyers is an honest man, whatever false friends and disguised traitors, may be vile enough to accuse him of," returned Marion, with undisguised indignation.

"Yet we shall see his head on Temple Bar, before the week is over, unless he confides in the assistance of those false friends, as you are pleased to call them," answered Ainsley with a laugh.

"Are you one of the number, that you speak thus decidedly?" demanded his companion, suddenly arresting her steps, and turning her large eyes full upon his face, with such a glance of scorn, that the reckless outlaw felt humbled beneath it. But he soon recovered, and laughing off his confusion, he answered, "no—no—there you are wrong, I am as true as steel to my old

comrade, and if it is his intention to get out of the kingdom, he has only to confide in me, and I will insure him a passage across the channel, in less than four and twenty hours. Always supposing he has money to pay for it."

"He would, no doubt, be much obliged, if he knew your kind intention," answered Marion, "and if you are really as faithful to him, as you profess, you will do well to give him some intimation to that effect."

"By St. Paul," cried the moss-trooper, "men were wont to believe, that what was whispered to thee, was the same as if spoken in the ear of Marston Conyers, and I warrant matters are not changed, since thou hast laid aside the doublet and hose."

"I have not seen Conyers, since I entered this city," was her sole reply.

"What, my fair damsel, and wouldest thou have me believe, that thou too art one of those false friends, who have forsaken him in the hour of adversity?" cried the man, half doubtfully, as with an inquisitive eye,

he surveyed the graceful figure he still continued to pursue.

"I tell thee, I know nothing of Master Conyers, and if thou hast any advice to send him, thou wouldest do well to find another messenger," rejoined Marion in a yet more decided tone than before.

"But how shall I know where to find him?" he persisted.

"In truth that is no business of mine," she returned with a slight laugh.

"And hast thou indeed deserted him, after his many years of protection and kindness?" inquired the rude sailor, in a tone, that brought the tears to the eyes of his listener, though she knew herself undeserving of the reproach it conveyed. "Ah, woman! woman! fickle woman!" he continued; "they are fools who think that any chains can bind thee. And yet thou art right! Why should a fair creature like thee, in the bloom of youth, cast herself into an abyss, because a man she once professed to love, has gone thither, before her, by his own folly. Life is sweet—

and pleasure is yet sweeter, and a girl with a pair of eyes like thine, can find pleasure at every turn, if she only knows how to profit by good fortune. I applaud your spirit, and you shall not lack a friend, now you have done with Marston Conyers, if you will accept of my protection."

" You are very kind," she said, " but I have no need of any man's protection."

" Ha ! you are proud, are you, my pretty damsel," said Ainsley, " but, let me tell you, that will serve you little with me. I put up with your saucy looks amongst the hills, where no one, willingly, provoked the petted favourite of Marston Conyers—but those days are past, I can tell you. When a woman goes running alone through the streets of London, she must take what she meets with. Come, come, you had better be good humoured at once, and tell me where you are going to—for I shall not leave you, till you have arrived at your journey's end, I promise you."

Marion stopped suddenly short, and turned towards him.

“ You cannot be serious,” she said, gravely ; “ in making such a threat. What business can it be of yours, where I dwell, or what can it profit you, to torment one, who has never given you, cause of offence ?”

“ All in the way of business, Mistress !” returned the sailor ; “ you have your affairs, and I have mine, and they both lead us the same road, that is all—so, it makes no matter to me, whether you choose to drink a cup of sack in a chimney corner, with an old acquaintance, or to pace through the streets at twenty miles an hour. You look confoundedly pale and fatigued—so you would do well to come back to the wine-house, and let us talk for half an hour comfortably together, over old times, and old friends. A girl who has worn boy’s clothes, and dwelt in Redesdale for half a score of years, cannot be very difficult about places or company.”

"In truth, if you are sincere, I will no longer refuse your offer," was the unexpected reply of Marion, to this repeated invitation—for, she felt convinced, that, in the street, she had no chance of getting rid of her companion. She hoped, that by complying with his wishes, she might not only find an opportunity for escape, but learn something more of his feelings towards Conyers. "I only trust," she added, "we have not much further to go."

"My suspicions are right, then! Thou hast travelled far to-day?" said the moss-trooper, with a cunning smile. "Thou hast come from the country, mayhap, with some one, who is about to sail for the Coast of Flanders. Art thou sure it is not Marston Conyers, after all?"

"I tell thee, I have not seen him, since I left the North," answered the girl, somewhat impatiently.

"Well, well, don't be angry—but these are times, when it is excusable to be a little inquisitive—especially, as I have a

light bark, that I have just freighted for Ostend ; and, I should be glad to find a friend or two, to carry to the other side of the water, to save their necks from the axe, and put a little profit into my own pocket.”

“Have you turned sailor, then, Master Ainsley, since you left the north ?” demanded Marion, with unfeigned surprise.

“I was bred to the sea when a boy,” was his reply, “and, an honest man must do something to earn a livelihood, in these times. Here we are, Mistress, so I pray you, follow me in, without fear, for they are all honest people here, I assure you.”

They were, now, in a narrow lane near Tower Hill ; and, the low wooden house to which Master Ainsley pointed, was far from being of a prepossessing appearance—nevertheless, Marion thought it most prudent to betray no reluctance to enter the open door, to which her conductor pointed. It led into a narrow passage—whose floor was only the

trodden earth—and, thence, into a small, low-roofed kitchen, unlightened, save by the rays of a huge coal fire. Two or three benches, and wooden stools, stood around a dirty table ; but, to Marion's infinite pleasure, they were unoccupied, save by one man. He was very stout, heavy built, and middle aged—and he, likewise, wore the dress of a sailor. Though he made an effort to arise, and salute Master Ainsley—he was evidently, more than half drunk, and could scarcely carry the tankard to his lips, when he proposed the health of the new comers.

“ Here, Mistress, make me a strong mug of sack, of your best,” roared Ainsley, as soon as he had made his companion take a place on a bench, and seated himself by her side.

A pale, yet lovely woman, miserably dressed, came forth at the summons, with a baby in her arms, from behind a low, mud wall, where she had been pursuing her household occupations. Marion gazed at her with

deep interest ; and, failed not to remark, on her thin, uncovered arms, the black marks of many blows, whilst the whole expression of her face and figure, was that of hopeless misery. Her wan, and wasted child, hung at her bosom, as if she could scarcely sustain its weight—and, her steps were listless and feeble, as she proceeded to obey the commands of her new customers.

“ Where is your husband to-day, Nell ?” demanded Ainsley, as she set the wine on the table. “ Has he found the hangman a new customer, or have some of his friends at court, given him work again ?”

Marion saw that the woman shuddered as she replied—

“ At home, or abroad, I never inquire his business.”

“ And I warrant, he is not disposed to be communicative,” said Ainsley. “ He knows better. Provided a man gives his wife food and clothing, she has no more to do with his affairs ; and, it seems thou hast blows enough into the bargain, to make thee hold

thy peace. Ay, ay, matters are changed, since thou wert the miller's fair daughter at Rothbury—and all the young men, far and near, came courting thee ! If you had followed your father's advice, you would have made a better match, and that is the truth of it—but, there is a fate in marriages, so you must make the best of a bad bargain. Fie, fie, Nell, weeping girl ! That's poor encouragement to your customers," and the hard-hearted man, without paying more attention to the poor, broken-hearted woman's tears, swallowed a long draught of the liquor she had set before him. Then, turning to Marion, he, likewise, filled her cup, and told her to drink and be merry, if she wished him to believe, that she had forgotten Marston Conyers.

"Confound that Conyers," cried the drunken sailor, opposite, "it is now a fortnight, since you set me to watch that traitor—and, I am just as far off, as ever. I begin to suspect, he has got across the water, and

slipped through our fingers, before we thought of being on the watch."

"It would be a pity, if he had missed such a snug berth," said Ainsley, winking to his associate; but the man was incapable, at that moment, of understanding such signs.

"He is a fish worth catching, since the Queen Dowager, has offered such a reward for his apprehension; and, there is no doubt, if we once had him in our ship—"

"Art thou drunk, or dreaming?" said the other, sternly interrupting him.

"Neither, Master," he replied. "I am as sober as you, or any man living; and, if I had Master Conyers in my clutches—"

"Thou wouldest get him safe out of the country," rejoined Ainsley, glancing anxiously towards Marion—who, without appearing to hear what passed, had been listening eagerly to this discourse.

"Oh! yes, safe enough, either at the bot-

tom of the sea, or the top of the scaffold," was the answer.

"Fill your glass, Master! fill your glass! If we work, we must drink!" cried the moss-trooper, and replenished the cups, in hopes of silencing his companion.

But Marion had heard enough, and aware that her only chance of escape depended on Ainsley's intoxication, she pretended to be grateful for his kindness, allowed him to fill her glass as often as his own, and though she contrived to empty its contents under the table without being perceived, she became apparently, gradually more and more gay, and at length even sung to encourage the potations of the moss-trooper.

The man they had found in the public, already slept, and the eyes of Master Ainsley were more than half closed, when, to the utter consternation of his poor prisoner, he was again fully aroused by the entrance of the Master of the house—a tall athletic fellow in a loose blue frock. He was decidedly handsome, yet debauchery and vice,

had already dimmed the lustre of his blue eyes, and bloated his well proportioned figure. Marion, as she looked at him, at once understood the whole history of his unhappy wife.

“ Well met, Master Ainsley,” he cried, the moment he passed the threshold. “ I have been in search of you this hour, or more, for I have news, capital news ! We have earthed the fox.”

“ And I have brought you a new guest !” said Ainsley, glancing significantly at Marion.

“ Ha, ha ! a pretty damsel, in good sooth ! but I must speak with you, and that without delay—so you must leave your company for a few minutes, and take a turn with me before the door, for I have much to tell you in the way of business.”

Ainsley looked around. The sailor slept, and Marion’s head also rested on her crossed arms on the table, and well knowing that she could not pass out into the street, with-

out his seeing her, he arose without reply, and followed the landlord to the door.

No sooner had he disappeared, than the girl sprang lightly from her seat. There was another entrance at the further end of the kitchen, and by this avenue she resolved, at all hazards, to attempt to escape.

But Nell, who sat on a block of wood, with her infant on her knee, behind the low partition, laid her hand on her arm, so as to arrest her movements, as she passed.

"Mistress," she said, in a low and mournful voice, "if you wish to escape, you must not go by that door. Your footsteps will be easily tracked, for few like you come into this neighbourhood; and they have their spies on every side. Follow me."

Marion made no reply, nor did she hesitate, for an instant; she had seen and heard enough to convince her, that the poor creature before her, was of a very different nature from the men, with whom her destiny had unfortunately brought her in connexion, and she confided at once in her honesty.

The hostess led her quickly into a dark pantry, thence along another passage, and then up a narrow staircase, into what appeared a hay-loft, of great length. It was apparently filled with straw, but as they hurried along a narrow avenue left in the centre, Marion saw enough to suspect that it was merely a covering for other goods, and rightly concluded it to be the warehouse of men engaged in some unlawful traffic.

“ My husband has taken to the sea-faring line, since we left the north,” said her hostess, with a deep sigh. “ I have indeed known better times, when Master Conyers, whom those below are chasing like a wild beast, for a miserable reward, brought back all my father’s cattle, that the Scotch had driven over the border. He had a page, who must have been either your brother, or yourself, and if you know aught of him, tell him to keep out of Ainsley’s company, as he would avoid the king’s executioner.”

“ Accident brought us together to-day,” said Marion.

"And a lucky accident too, if it has put you more on your guard," rejoined Nell. "All this part of the town is infested by traitors, who save their own necks by betraying their old friends; but if you descend this staircase from the loft, and cross the opening to the right, you will get rapidly away from the river, and into streets, where, at this hour, they dare not be 'seen.'"

"The saints reward you," answered Marion, pressing the hand of the wretched hostess in hers, ere she departed. "The time may come when I may have it in my power to return your kindness, and if now you will accept this piece of gold—" and she offered her money as she spoke.

"No—no," returned the woman, interrupting her, and putting it from her, "I have food, more than enough, and I lack nought else, for I and my child shall soon be in the grave," and tears fell from the broken-hearted mother's eyes, over her dying and almost insensible infant.

Marion had nought to reply, but the look

of tender pity with which she regarded these victims of man's vice and cruelty, brought a sad smile into the lips of poor Nell, as she turned away, to resume her place in the kitchen, and endure the reproaches and even blows that fell upon her, when the flight of Marion was discovered by Ainsley and her husband.

CHAPTER. X.

MARION, for some time, pursued her flight with the utmost rapidity, but it was not till she had reached a very distant quarter of the town, that she felt relieved from the fear of pursuit. At length, fatigue obliged her to slacken her pace, but she still persevered in making her way as circuitous as possible, ever dreading that her steps might be traced, if she proceeded direct to her resting place for the night.

It was, therefore, near the close of evening ere she entered a gloomy court, leading from Fleet Street, in the vicinity of Temple Bar. The busy city was still full of passengers, but to her satisfaction, all seemed too much occupied by their own affairs, to pay any attention to her movements, and she advanced without further hesitation, to a low wooden house at the end of the court, and tapped against a closed window-shutter, twice, and then twice again. Not two minutes elapsed, ere the door under a porch, where she had concealed herself, was cautiously unclosed, and an old woman looked out, and coughed audibly three times.

“ It is I, Margery,” whispered Marion, and gliding past the portress, the door was in an instant closed in the inside.

“ Is all well ?” was the girl’s eager demand, before the old woman had finished replacing the bolts and bars.

“ All is marvellously well, thank the saints, considering he has had a heavy touch

of the awful malady, that is devastating the city," was Margery's reply.

"What do I hear ! his life has been in danger, and I far from him !" cried Marion ; and already overcome by fatigue and anxiety, she tottered back, half fainting, against the wall, whilst with her eyes fixed eagerly on the old woman, her lips moved, as if to question her.

Her grey haired hostess held her light on high, so as to shed its feeble rays directly on her visiter's pale, agonised, yet still lovely face, and she uttered a short exclamation of sorrow, when she beheld the ravages that affliction, more than time, had wrought on the person of the beautiful girl, who, in former years, it was her proudest boast to say, had once drawn her nourishment from her bosom. But though the tempest of adversity, like the withering blast of the desert, had swept over her in the brightest days of her youth, the faithful nurse regarded her still as her child, her innocent, her persecuted child, and when all others invoked curses on

the head of the heretic, Margery had clung to her to the last, and assisted her to escape with Conyers, when other hopes were past. She was now a childless widow, and Marion, in her new reverse of fortune, had ventured to fix on her house, as the place of meeting, where Conyers should await her on his arrival in London.

It was the intention of the moss-trooper, to endeavour to join the priest, Sir Christopher Urswick, as soon as possible, in Paris ; trusting to obtain a royal pardon by his intercession. Marion had insisted on being the partner of his flight, which, till that day, she had hoped could be accomplished with little difficulty. Chance had taught her, they were surrounded by spies ; but even the fears thus awakened were forgotten when she heard from Margery, that Conyers had been attacked during her absence, by the kind of plague then raging in London.

Her first feeling was, that he was dead, but she lacked the power to give utterance

to this terrible idea, till Margery's cry of lamentation over her child's faded beauty, which she falsely interpreted into a confirmation of her fears, aroused her to renewed energy, and starting forward she seized the old woman's withered hand in hers, and exclaimed—"Say not that he is laid in the earth! say not that we are divided for ever and for ever, but if he is still above ground, lead me to his chamber, let me once more look on him, let me clasp the cold corpse to my heart, of him I would have died to save!"

"Take comfort my darling!" said the nurse, terrified by the emotion she had unwittingly excited, "he lives, and thanks to the blessed Virgin, he is out of all danger."

"Dare I believe your words?" was the poor wanderer's sole reply.

"In truth you may. Master Conyers would have no doctor, not he. But it seems he understood how to treat himself better than half the doctors in the city, for he lay in bed closely covered, till the disease came

to its height, and yesterday it took a turn, and he now needs nothing but rest and nourishment. He has often talked of you, and I warrant the sight of you will set all to rights."

"Show me to his chamber, dear Madge," repeated Marion in scarcely audible accents, and though the old woman longed to ask her a thousand questions, about all that had passed during the years they had been separated, she was too much awed by the deep melancholy of her foster-child's deportment, to venture to utter a syllable.

Marion loved her tenderly ; but so profound was the passion which then engrossed her whole soul, that she was scarcely conscious of her presence, and followed her mechanically to an upper story. With a wildly beating heart, she approached the chamber of Conyers ; but as she stood upon the threshold, a strange change came over her. The remembrance of departed years, rushed like a dark flood upon her mind. The long agony she had secretly endured,

under the conviction that Conyers regarded her only as the unfortunate object of his charity, and that to his friendship for her father, she was alone indebted for his protection, the pangs his calm kindness had inflicted on her passionate heart, all returned like a maddening dream upon her half distracted brain, and she felt with unutterable despair, that the indifference she had formerly assumed, must again veil the ardour of her attached and devoted heart, from him who would despise her love. She thought of her father's shame, and she knew with bitter agony, that the ties of kindred, and wedlock, with all their train of tender charities, were alike denied to her.

She paused a moment after Margery entered the chamber, that she might recover the appearance of composure. It was a hard struggle; but firm of purpose, she had too long held her passion under command, to be wanting at such a moment; and ere long, though her heart still beat wildly, yet out-

wardly calm, she followed the steps of the nurse.

The room she entered, was clean though humbly furnished, but it might have been a palace ; Marion would have observed it not. She saw only one object it contained, and that was Conyers.

The moss-trooper was sitting in an old wicker-wrought, arm chair, writing, near the fire, with a small table before him. The rays of a feeble lamp mingled with the gleam from the chimney, scarcely afforded light sufficient for him to pursue his occupation, but his long hours of solitary seclusion, had rendered him impatient of idleness, and he had still continued his toil after the close of day. His cap and sheep-skin mantle were laid aside, and he wore an ordinary gown of blue Coventry cloth, strapped round the waist, with a leathern belt, and finished at the neck, by a narrow ruff, more than half concealed by his thick, pointed beard. The air of gaiety that formerly enlivened his

features, was gone, and his brow and cheeks wore the pale hue of sickness. Yet the expression of his countenance was calm and even noble, for lofty ideas engaged his thoughts.

On the table lay his battle axe, as if, in case of surprise, he was resolved to make a desperate effort for escape, and when the old woman entered, he looked up from his occupation, like one who, even in the midst of the deepest abstraction, was ever on his guard against an enemy.

When he saw only the nurse, he smiled, and resumed his writing. Whilst thus engaged, he was unconscious of Marion's approach, as with noiseless steps she entered into the room ; he knew not that the searching eyes of love were upon him, tracing with agony the ravages that sickness and anxiety had wrought on his strong frame. Marion with difficulty restrained her tears. At length, when she thought of the past, a deep sigh burst from her overcharged heart.

Conyers, at such an unusual sound, looked

up, and he scarcely dared to believe his senses, when, in the light of his pale lamp, he saw Marion, like a spirit of pity, directly in front of him, gazing on him with an earnest look of the deepest sympathy and affection. She did not move when their eyes met. There was an expression in those of Conyers, which utterly astonished her. During their separation, she had never dared to hope that he remembered her with affection, or felt her absence with regret. But now, it was not surprise alone, that his animated countenance betrayed, but the joy of hope fulfilled—and the satisfied longing of the soul for the unseen—the desire that makes the present tedious, spoke from those eyes. Such was the delight, such the hope, their silent language awoke in Marion's heart, that her newly formed resolutions nearly gave way, before the thrilling emotions this unhoped for reception awakened in her breast.

But, in another instant, the light passed from the outlaw's countenance. It seemed,

as if he, too, had driven back to their secret cell, the feelings awakened by the first appearance of the maiden, or, that sadder thoughts had re-placed them ; for, whilst she still stood, fearful to address him, lest the tremour of her voice should betray her hidden emotion, he arose, and coming towards her, with a father's calm affection, he took her hand in his, and imprinted a kiss upon her brow. Yet the girl failed not to remark, that his cheek, before so pale, was flushed with crimson, whilst the hand that pressed hers, was damp and chill ; but, the voice that gave her welcome—though mournful—was so firm, that the wild ideas excited by these signs of emotion, passed away like the beams of the departed sun, from the melancholy cloud of evening. She felt, once more, as she had long felt, that she was alone in her sorrow, and she stood ready to be the hand-maiden of him, she worshipped—even unto the grave—convinced by long experience, that she could never be aught else to him.

"I have come at an unlucky hour—and, I interrupt you in some serious business, Master Conyers," she said, with the same profound respect, with which she had ever been accustomed to address her benefactor.

"Thou art ever welcome, my poor wanderer," he replied, with more than usual softness of manner; "and, in truth, I rejoice to see thee, for I began to be somewhat anxious that some evil might have befallen thee. Thou hast tarried three days longer than I reckoned."

"Lady Isabel was ill, and weary, and we rested at Newark."

"But, I trust she has reached London undiscovered."

"All hath gone well," answered the maiden. "She hath met my worthy uncle, Master Andrews, ere now; and, I have escaped—though, in truth, I have met with serious difficulties on my way hither—I have, unluckily, been recognized, even

thus attired, by Ainsley, that brawling freebooter, who was ever wont in Redesdale, to be the first in all evil ; I have discovered, he is, now, making a trade of the unfortunate Yorkists ; and, pretending to procure them a passage to the continent, delivers them for a reward to the vengeance of the law."

" Marion, art thou sure of this ?" demanded Conyers, with evident anxiety.

" He took me to a wine house, against my will," answered the girl, eagerly ; " and there, I learnt it from his own lips, and those of his associates. Conyers, by all things sacred, I trust that you have not placed confidence in this man !" she added, interpreting, with the quickness of woman's love, the changes of her companion's countenance, whilst she recounted the treachery of his former companion.

" Quiet thy fears, Marion," answered the outlaw, who was, evidently, touched by the warm interest she thus betrayed in his

safety. “No man knows precisely, where I am to be found.”

“But, they have learnt you are in London! they will track your steps! The slightest thread, will guide them to their prey—for, oh! Master Conyers, too well I know, that Ainsley hath long borne you deep, and bitter hatred. You have compelled him to restore his plunder to the poor, ere now; your strong command put a curb upon his evil passions; and, he will eagerly seize an opportunity to take revenge.”

“He is in my power, though he knows it not,” said the moss-trooper. “By a lucky chance, I have intercepted letters since we parted, between him and Carlton, and Carlton and Lord Lovel, exposing a new conspiracy to overturn the government—which will suffice to bring them both to the scaffold, when once they are placed in Sir Christopher Urswick’s hands. Nothing, I trust, will prevent my reaching Paris in a brief space, and then, all will be well. But if this

Ainsley be false, as you relate, I must seek some other way of crossing the Channel."

"You have not already applied to him?" demanded Marion, anxiously.

"No one knows the secret of my abode. I have carefully concealed it, even from Joe Wilson, the Cheviot stable-keeper, with whom I left my horse, when I came hither. I have only agreed to meet him, from time to time, at Vespers, in St. Dunstan's Church, and he told me about half an hour ago, when I saw him there for the first time, since my illness, that he had opened a negotiation for our passage to Ostend, with this Ainsley, by means of a fellow from Rothbury, who is the master of his little trading vessel."

"Alas! alas! then all is lost," cried Marion, in mournful accents. "Spies will be set on your movements, and your life will speedily be sacrificed."

"It matters little," said Conyers, with a deep sigh. "If my time is come, I am content to die. The only thing that pains me, is, that it must be upon a scaffold. I would

I had fallen on the battle field—for, now the House of York is dethroned, I have no more to do upon the face of the earth. Childless—poor—and dishonoured, I have lost the young energy that made the wild life of Redesdale a pleasure, and a pastime, that banished the remembrance of the blest ties of civilized and social life ; and, I have no gentle heart bound to me by tender bonds, to shed the light of love around my winter hearth, or to soothe the infirmities of age, by its soft care and sympathy. I have lived in war, and, I can no longer hope to see the blossoms of peace spring up around me. It is better to die !” and the outlaw hid his face with his hands, to conceal the tears that dimmed his eyes.

Eagerly did Marion gaze at him, whilst he uttered this outburst of a broken heart’s despair ; but, absorbed by his own feelings, he appeared to take no heed of her presence. She was nought to him, she thought—she had never been more than an object of his generosity—and, all he had done for her,

had been from a mere necessity of his noble nature ! it had been benevolence, not love, that influenced him—and, now, in his desolation, and his solitude, her gratitude was powerless, to draw the rankling thorn from his heart. Marion pitied him ; she pitied herself ! Worlds would she have given to have poured out, with all the eloquence of feeling, the long suppressed passion, which had bound her to him a willing slave—even unto death—and which, had made his pangs and his sorrows hers. But, convinced that he counted her love not worth acceptance, she mastered the impulse ; yet, she could not suppress her tears, and she wept in silence.

“ You pity me,” said the strong man, at length, when he marked her grief ; “ and, from my soul, I thank thee, for my mind is weakened, Marion—my spirit is broken. I can no more struggle with the fearful tide of life, as I was wont. I have been ill—very ill ; and, though the crisis is past, the thoughts

are not forgotten, that haunted my sick bed. Ah ! it is bitter to be tended by the hand of strangers—bitter to think, that, without payment, none would hold the cup to my parched lips—and, it was yet more sad, to feel that no friendly hand was near to close my eyes ; or, had it been God's pleasure, then, to call my soul to its dread account, that not one upon earth, would be less happy even for an hour, because I was gone."

" Oh ! cease, cease, you do me too much wrong !" murmured Marion, falling on her knees before him, with an emotion she could not command, and hiding her weeping face upon his knees.

" Pardon me, my child, if I doubted even your fidelity," he continued, with yet wilder energy ; " I had learnt by a long and sad experience, that nought, but self-interest, was predominant in all men's hearts, of every rank and party. When I knew, that I, who had shed my blood, and devoted my life and energies, to place the crown on Henry's head,

was sacrificed to a weak woman's vengeance, and hunted from my native land as a traitor, by the commands of the sovereign, whom I had contributed to establish on the throne, when, even on the bed of sickness, I could not feel secure from pursuit—and, when cruel suspense, and the bitter sense of ingratitude, gnawed into my very vitals, with a sharper tooth, than even the pangs of the plague, or the apprehension of death and dishonour. Ah ! wonder not, my poor Marion, if, in spite of all thy faithful services, I feared, that thou, even thou, hadst forsaken the proscribed man, in his misery and his desolation."

"Would you had known me better!" murmured the girl, looking up with clasped hands, into his agitated face, with an expression of the most imploring sadness. "Ah ! Master Conyers, I am not cold and indifferent—as, perchance, my manner had falsely led you to believe. Your generous protection, has not been thrown away upon

an ungrateful heart. It cost me bitter tears to leave you in the hour of adversity—even with Lady Isabel—but, it was your command. I have, ever, implicitly obeyed your orders; and, I thought—forgive me if I judged harshly—but, I imagined, from the indifference with which you dismissed me, that you were glad to be rid, at such a moment, of a feeble woman, whose weakness might impede your flight."

"Is it possible!" returned the outlaw, regarding her with a fixed intensity of gaze, that seemed to seek to read from her tearful eyes the secrets of her soul. "Was my manner so harsh, so cold! Alas, it strangely belied my heart, if it taught you to believe, that for such a base and selfish motive, I could rejoice, in that hour of bitter agony, when I learnt that I was the hunted prey of mankind, on whose head a price was set, to lose the only being, who amidst my wild life, had still kept alive in my heart the pure

and noble feelings, woman's birth-right, which my mother's lips had first infused into my heart ; the guardian angel who had hovered near me during long years of danger and affliction, to sooth, to cherish and to save ! No, no, Marion, though fearful of breaking the spell that bound us together—though dreading that a maiden, young, and fair as you, would reject with scorn the devotion of a rude old soldier, whose years had more than doubled yours, and whom time and heavy trials had robbed of all those qualities, that win the hearts of women, I have ever struggled to conceal the ardent love I bore you, under the guise of a parent's affection ; yet I was mad enough to be wounded to the very soul, that you accepted this mockery for truth, and left me in solitude and despair—carelessly as I thought, and ignorant—or despising the deep, devoted love, that I for years had borne you ; and will do, even to the scaffold, or the grave."

Wildly, as in a dream, did Marion drink into her very soul, this rapturous confession,

scarcely daring to believe its import. Could it be, that the despair, and the hopeless loneliness of her life was for ever past ; that the noble heart of him, the only being she had ever loved on earth, that all she had ever desired, ever covetted, was hers ? yet as one after another, his passionate words fell upon her ear, she knew that her wishes were accomplished, and worlds would she have given, when he ceased speaking, to assure him, that he, the rude old soldier as he styled himself, was the chosen idol of her heart, without whose love, the world had been valueless in her sight. But her feelings were too strong for words. She could only pronounce his name, and holding forth her arms towards him, she fell weeping on his bosom.

“ Marion, what means this emotion ?” demanded Conyers, in a voice of agony. “ Give me no vain hopes ; let not your gratitude deceive you and me ; think not I wish to involve you as a sacrifice, in my misfortunes. I had resolved never to speak of my love, and if from the weakness of long disease,

the secret has escaped my lips, I would not that your generous feelings—that your pity—”

“ Oh, Conyers !” exclaimed Marion, looking up and eagerly interrupting him, “ talk not of gratitude nor pity, when my whole soul is yours ! I am too blest to speak—my heart is too full, to be able to recount the long agony I have endured, in believing your indifference. But it is past ! past for ever, and I the most blest of women,” and again she hid her face, and wept tears of passionate delight.

The spell was broken ; in the depth of adversity the veil was lifted from the eyes of both, and these two noble hearted beings, at a moment when they appeared surrounded by the heaviest trials that persecution can inflict ; cut off from the rest of their race, poor, disgraced, and in danger, at length knew, that Providence hath prepared in the sympathy of ardent attachment, a counterbalance to all the worst evils, that the corruptions of human passions, and hu-

man society, can inflict upon man. The condemned traitor, learnt that one heart was true to him, and he was happy ; the persecuted woman forgot her long years of misery and despair, and with the enchantment of female imagination, adorned the present and the future with joy and brightness.

Hour after hour flew over the heads of these two devoted beings, and the silence was only occasionally interrupted by broken words of rapture, and sometimes tears. Their youth of mind had returned, and the feelings, long suppressed, burst forth with all the vigour and enjoyment of their early years.

It is the heartless alone who believe that love can grow old.

“ It is, and remains spring for ever.”

Base passions may extinguish it ; thronging images in absence may flit athwart it, and for a time dim its lustre, but as long as the human faculties retain their vigour, as long as the mind, undegraded by selfish in-

terests, remains faithful to simplicity and truth, love, once born, lives on in the temple of an honest heart, diffusing freshness, and beauty, and vigour, even in old age, over the intellect, the feelings, and the whole existence of its votary. Swiftly passed more than half the night in that desolate chamber, as Marion related to Conyers the early proffered love of Master Carlton ; her engagement to a young esquire, who was her father's ward ; the Secretary's dark revenge, when she, the daughter of a poor country gentleman, had dared reject his suit, and the subsequent accusations he brought against her father as a Lollard. His sacrifice, and her own danger, she passed over, as already known to the outlaw, to whose care Marion had been consigned by the confessor of the martyr, who touched by his sufferings, and convinced of his sincere, though perhaps, on some points, illegal faith, had promised him, ere he was led to the stake, to save his innocent child. She recounted, how the youth to whom

she had been engaged by her father, had rejected her, as he would have spurned the vilest of degraded beings. She had loved him as girls love the first being, whom their imagination invests with all the qualities they admire, and her young heart was stricken and wounded by his miserable desertion and ingratitude, at an hour, when had he been such as she had fondly believed him, he would have ventured life itself in her defence. She had listened to the words of love and flattery from his lips ; with the credulous confidence of youth she had believed them true ; and his cold hearted disdain, convinced her more forcibly of her entire separation, for the future, from all human sympathies, than even the shouts of savage joy, she had heard around her father's blazing funeral pile.

She followed Conyers, then a childless widower, to the North, at the age of fifteen, fresh and beautiful to outward show, but withered in heart, as if fifty winters of misfortunes had shed their gloom upon her

silvered hairs. She doubted of human virtue—human fidelity, and above all of human love.

But by degrees, the noble and generous character of Conyers, won her admiration and respect. The very contrast of his soldier-like, cheerful manners, to the silken courtesy of her former lover, was an attraction ; and when she marked how he stood alone amidst his half savage, and often worthless associates, and governed them simply by the force of his decided will and strong moral energy, she sympathised with his occasional sadness, of which she only was the witness, and yielded her whole heart, like a true woman, to the generous and the strong. Then it was, that Marion had truly loved, for the first time, with all the ardour of her tender and passionate nature ; then it was, that she thanked Providence that she had escaped the chains of the miserable worldling, who was too base, too abject a slave of the voice of the multitude, to dare to shield the woman he had chosen for his bride, against

unjust obloquy and persecution ! But she did not hope ! the cruel lesson she had already received, had robbed her of the power. She only vowed in the secret recesses of her heart, to be the outlaw's bond-woman to the last moment of her existence. And well had she kept this vow, labouring ever, on the desolate mountain and in the crowded city, to fulfil his pleasure.

Much of all this Conyers heard that night from her lips, and his sickness and his danger were alike forgotten, as he listened to her narrative ; nor were plans for their future safety forgotten. They both felt, that existence was once more precious to them, and Conyers esteemed it an absolute duty to take every means to effect their escape to France. Once he spoke anxiously of Hubert, regretting that he was ignorant, even of the existence of one, who would have been a faithful assistant in such an emergency. After much consideration, they decided that it was absolutely necessary for them, to quit the house of Margery on the morrow,

and to leave the stable-keeper, Wilson, to await another interview with Conyers in St. Dunstan's Church, without the latter incurring the needless risk of meeting him there again.

The most difficult point to be considered was, where they should seek an asylum; and gladly before they recommenced their wanderings, would they have been united by the holy bonds of matrimony,

Had Sir Christopher Urswick been in London, Conyers would at once have claimed from his friendship, the performance of the ceremony, but fearing now to entrust any other priest with the secret of their real names, it was determined, that till their union could take place, Marion should pass for the soldier's daughter.

Though the old nurse was unwilling that her foster-child should quit her dwelling, the knowledge of her danger reconciled her to their separation. Fortunately, a brother of Margery's husband, a small grocer in one of the numerous lanes between St. Paul's and the river, was in the habit of taking lodgers,

and thither she recommended them to remove. Conyers readily agreed to follow this advice, but judged it best, not to be furnished with any introduction from the nurse, but to engage an apartment under a false name, as a banished Lancastrian, newly returned from the continent, in consequence of the change of government.

This was accordingly done, and all succeeded admirably. The soldier and his fair companion arrived, they trusted undiscovered, at their new abode, and the grocer, who had a large family, and small custom, was delighted to receive a new lodger, who paid without objection, his rent in advance.

CHAPTER XI.

COYERS and Marion soon found, that they had lost much, in quitting the abode of Margery. Their new dwelling was dirty and noisy ; above and below, the chambers were occupied by the poorest class of workmen, and though happy in each other's society often did they both sigh for the pure air and tranquillity, and freedom of their rude home in Redesdale. More than all, their

landlord could give them no attendance, and frequently was Conyers obliged to go forth in the dusk of the evening, to purchase the necessaries of life. Though his purchases were made with the utmost rapidity, the brief time of his absence was an age of agony to Marion, and she repeatedly implored him, but in vain, to be allowed to perform this dangerous office for him.

The soldier on this point was firm. It was cruel enough, he said, that his affianced wife must perform the mean services of domestic toil, but he would die sooner than expose her to insult, by sending her forth alone into the streets, after the close of day. He had not forgotten Master Ainsley and the wine house.

Marion was compelled to submit, but her daily anxiety, joined to her unwonted confinement, and the noxious air of the place where she dwelt, ere long produced an evident ill effect upon her health. Conyers saw with concern, that like a bird accustomed to the freedom of the mountains, she pined

away in captivity, and his impatience to escape from England, became greater than ever.

Without informing her of his purpose, he sought, during his short absences, to obtain some information as to the different vessels about to cross the channel to Flanders, or France; yet nearly three weeks elapsed, after their change of residence, ere he heard of anything at all likely to forward his desires.

When he returned one morning near the end of October, with joyful impatience to announce his discovery of a ship, to Marion, his satisfaction was considerably diminished, on learning from his landlord, that a stranger had been at the house, twice, during his absence, to demand an interview with him, under his assumed name of Hall.

To his increased astonishment, the grocer added, that when the gentleman was told he was from home, he had requested to speak with his daughter, whom, in obedience to his former demands, he had likewise denied.

The image of Ainsley and his associates immediately rose before him, but on reflection, it appeared impossible that the freebooter could have learnt, either his change of name, or the assumed character of Marion ; nor on further inquiry, did the description given by the grocer of the stranger, at all correspond, with the appearance of Ainsley, or any of his known companions.

He was certain, he said, that he was a gentleman, though plainly clad, for his language was smooth and soft like a courtier's, and so friendly, that in truth he was sorry Master Hall was not at home to receive him.

"I tell you once again," answered Conyers, sternly "I receive no man. I have already told you, that till I am provided with a better lodging, I wish none of my friends to know of my return to England."

"But if they do know, Master Hall, what can I say," persisted the man.

"Say I am absent—I am sick—say what you please, but let no stranger enter my

chamber, on peril of our immediate removal."

"Ha, ha ! sits the wind that way!" thought the grocer as he descended the stairs. "There is more in this proud varlet, than meets the ear. I warrant, what my wife says, is true, and that he is a traitor, who wants to get out of the country, instead of a patriot, who has just returned to it. If that civil gentleman returns, I shall not be such a fool as to refuse his money, a second time ; I warrant I shall be well paid for the trifling service of showing him up stairs. My tenant seeks a better lodging forsooth, and I cannot do better than help him to one, if it puts money in my purse."

In consequence of this resolve, he passed from his shop into the street, to ascertain if there was anything to be seen of the stranger. A tall figure shortly in a wide mantle, appeared approaching, and the grocer no sooner recognised his recent visiter, than he coughed three times most significantly, to attract his attention.

“Has he returned?” hastily demanded the gentleman, when he reached the door.

“Yes, master, he has returned,” was the reply. “But he is not the more visible for that. I am forbidden on pain of his awful displeasure, to allow any one to enter his chamber.”

“Ha! say you so!” said the unknown; “but to judge from your voice, yon little regard the threat, and methinks this silver key can open many doors,” and he slipped two pieces of money into the grocer’s willing hand, as he spoke.

“You speak truly, sir,” he answered obsequiously, “I wish no lodgers in my house, who are afraid to be seen. If you choose to walk up stairs, to the left door on the second landing. I will do nothing to hinder you; or, should that be locked, turn to the right, and at the end of the passage, you will find an entry through a dark passage, which this key will unlock. Master Hall thinks it is nailed up, but I have drawn out the screws, since I began to have suspicions.

Yet hark you, sir ! If my lodger is a traitor, and you get a reward for his apprehension, I expect to share it, that is all. Otherwise I allow no noise and confusion in my house."

" You are right, quite right ! half the reward if there is one, you are justly entitled to," returned the stranger, with the same smile, which had at first enchanted the grocer, and pushing gently past him, he sprang lightly up three steps at a time, to the upper story.

Marion and Conyers meanwhile, unconscious of what was passing below, were forming many wild conjectures as to the character of their visiter ; all of which ended in the firm conviction, that it could be no other than Carlton, who had found means to trace their steps, and bribed their landlord to betray them. The idea was terrible, for if such were the reality, it was too evident, that no means of escape remained to them, unless it were possible to quit the house in the dead of the night, and

thus once more elude the pursuit of their relentless enemy.

Fearful of the stranger's return, their first care, as their landlord had rightly foreseen, had been to secure their door, and they rejoiced at their prudence, when rapid steps were soon afterwards heard ascending the staircase. To their infinite relief, they passed by, and they were exulting in the hope that the unknown would no more return that night, when to their utter consternation, some one knocked gently for admission, at the door communicating with the inner chamber where Marion slept.

Conyers seized his battle axe in his hand, and sprang forward to prevent, if possible, the entrance of the stranger, whom he no longer doubted to be Carlton.

But ere he could cross the floor, the latch was turned—the door pushed open, and the visiter stood before him.

“ Hubert !” exclaimed he and Marion in the same breath ; and the soldier flung down his battle-axe, and clasped his friend in his

arms, with a long and cordial embrace.—“Thank heaven that thou, like Marion, art true to the unfortunate,” he said in an agitated voice, “I had else lost all belief in friendship and in love.”

“I am overjoyed to see you safe,” returned Saville, whilst he extended a hand to both his friends. “I am truly grateful that I have been at length able to discover you, in spite of all your precautions, for I bring happy tidings to you both. All your misfortunes are at an end, and I am the bearer of a royal pardon, for Marion Sandford, and for Marston Conyers !”

Then producing the important papers, he gave them to his astonished listeners, whilst his eyes overflowed with tears of pleasure.

“Pardon !” exclaimed Marion wildly, “pardon for Conyers !”

“And for thee !” returned Hubert, whilst the soldier, stunned by this sudden news, continued to gaze steadily and earnestly at the paper he had given him.

“Hubert,” he said at length, “did I not

recognize the royal signature, I should doubt even thy word."

"And I will pardon thee, provided anything can convince thee that thy name is erased from the list of traitors."

"And Marion?" murmured the outlaw.

"Is likewise absolved by the royal command, from all past accusations."

"Just heaven I thank thee," ejaculated Conyers, with clasped hands. "Henceforth let no man doubt, in his despair, of the protection of Providence. Must I be grateful to Lady Isabel, or to thee, my friend, for this great service?"

"I have found favour with the king," answered Hubert with a smile, "and he has granted this double grace to my petition."

Marion bent down and kissed his hand, whilst her tears fell thick and fast.

"Angels in heaven bless you for the noble deed," she said. "No gratitude of ours can ever requite the gift, that you have now conferred on us. You have lifted me from the dust; you have dispelled the cloud of

infamy, that for years has clung around me, and at times almost darkened my intellect ; now, without shame can I go fearlessly amidst the world—now can I dare to love, nor feel that my attachment is a disgrace to the husband, who must otherwise have dared the scorn of society, in taking me to his hearth. Now—now—am I, for the first time since my childhood happy—and thou, Hubert, thou, art the cause. May heaven reward thee, for I never can !”

Conyers passed his arm round her waist, with a joy scarcely less than her own, and she leaned against the soldier’s iron frame, with the ecstatic feeling that she had now a right to his support.

“ When I tell you, Hubert,” he said simply, “ that Marion and I, only waited for the certainty of safety, to be united in the bonds of wedlock, you will better understand the magnitude of the obligation you have conferred on us.”

“ That I have been made an instrument to contribute to the happiness of those, to

whom I owe so much, is a proud satisfaction," answered the young man, "and I trust it will be no diminution of your pleasure, when I say, that his Majesty annexed conditions to his pardon."

"Name them," cried Conyers eagerly, "in all things we are ready to serve him."

"He requires the appearance of Marion, as a witness of the assassination of Sir Hugh Collingwood, by Master Carlton!"

"Is that all?" exclaimed the girl, looking up with joyous eyes. "Let the king summon me, when it pleaseth him, I am ready to attest the truth. And now tell me, Master Hubert, some news of Lady Isabel! and by what lucky chance your own fortunes have undergone so bright a change. Are your birth and rights acknowledged?"

"Till the return of Sir Christopher Urswick, no direct proofs can be brought forward," he replied, "but Lady Isabel, who is safely lodged with your uncle, Master Andrews, has received me as her grandson."

"But how did you discover our hiding place?"

"For three weeks I have sought in vain, till Master Andrews remembered your old servant Margery, and having discovered her abode, we proceeded thither together. For long she denied all knowledge of you, till last evening, convinced that our intentions were friendly, she confessed she knew were you were concealed, and would request your permission to disclose what she had sworn to you to conceal."

"We heard nothing from her," cried Marion eagerly.

"We found this morning, some reason I know not what, had prevented her going to you; but when impatient of further delay, we showed her the royal pardon of which I was the bearer, she no longer hesitated to direct us to your lodging."

"Is Carlton under arrest?" demanded Conyers abruptly.

"The king has refused to issue a warrant for his apprehension, till certain of his conviction, by Marion's testimony."

“ And I, moreover can swear, that he treated with me to raise a troop to oppose the invasion of his Majesty, and can produce his own letters as proofs of his treason, since Henry was seated on the throne.”

“ Better and better, Master Conyers,” was Hubert’s reply, “ and now, if you will, accompany me to the Palace, I have no doubt that by Lord Clifford’s intervention, we shall quickly obtain an interview with the king, or at all events the desired warrant.”

“ I will go with pleasure,” said the soldier, “ but I like not to leave Marion alone.”

“ Her uncle the jeweller is eager to embrace her,” answered Hubert, “ and if Marion is willing, we can escort her to his house, and leave her there with Lady Isabel, till we return with the joyful news that Carlton is in custody.”

“ Are you sure I shall be welcome?” demanded the girl, with timidity.

“ As welcome as the prodigal son to the arms of his father,” returned Hubert with a smile, “ and let us not delay.”

As they were all eager to accomplish the object they had in view, Marion, without further hesitation, wrapped her mantle around her, and followed them from the house.

As they descended the stairs, their host was waiting in the dark passage beneath, and though not daring to impede their progress, he lost not the opportunity of whispering in Hubert's ear as he passed :

“ You will not forget your promise, Master ! half the reward ! ”

“ What I receive, you shall share,” answered the young man, with an expressive smile, and they passed on unmolested.

A few minutes later, three dark, ruffianly looking men entered the shop, and demanded of the grocer, to be conducted to the chamber of the traitor, Master Conyers, to secure his papers, whilst their comrades made sure of his person ; and the tradesman, believing that they and Hubert were all part of the same gang, led them with all speed to the second story, lately occupied by his lodger.

But Conyers had taken the precaution to leave everything he possessed of value in the house of old Margery, and nothing rewarded them for their search, but a small bundle of linen.

Unconscious that their steps were tracked, and no longer fearful of meeting the public eye, Hubert and his companions happily pursued their way to Mincing Lane, and there entered the house of the jeweller.

The joy with which Marion was received by her uncle, at once relieved her mind from all lingering fear of the world's contempt. She presented Conyers to him, as her honorable protector during the long years of her wanderings and persecution, and now her affianced husband ; and Andrews, who was well acquainted with his noble character, and the high respect in which he was held by Sir Christopher Urswick, at once embraced him as a son.

The generous heart of Lady Isabel rejoiced in the recovered happiness of the

friends to whom she owed her liberty, and all the hopes that now made life precious to her; and convinced that no obstacle remained longer to prevent the punishment of Carlton, she was scarcely less happy than Marion herself.

Gladly would Hubert have sent tidings of what had passed to Ellen, but as the gates of Baynard's Castle had been closed against Master Andrews, since Hubert played the part of his apprentice, it was impossible to do so, and he was obliged to content himself, with the hope, that she had been consoled in her solitude, by the short scrawl he had slipped into her hand, the previous evening, in the Church of St. Paul, when Margery's admission, that she was acquainted with the residence of Marion, had led him to anticipate, that the morrow would be the crisis of their fate.

But though all the friends thus assembled, had many and important interests to explain, and to hear from each other, the time too

was precious to be given to such converse. They were well aware, that as long as Carlton remained at liberty, and the ear of the king was open to his falsehoods, the fortunes of Hubert were as much as ever in doubt, whilst no happiness could be considered permanent, which it was his interest to destroy. The continued favour with which he had been received at court, made even Master Andrews doubtful, if his Majesty would prove faithful to his promise of withdrawing his support from the Secretary, and allowing justice to take its course. So anxious was the worthy man to know the event of Hubert's visit to the palace, that he resolved to accompany him and Conyers to the apartment of Lord Clifford, where he could more speedily receive information.

It was past two o'clock, ere they arrived there—and the young nobleman, generously sympathizing in their anxiety, lost no time in informing his majesty of their desire for an interview

Henry, under the guise of friendship, was impatiently awaiting the moment of Carlton's destruction—whom, even when serving him most abjectly, he perpetually mistrusted and detested, as a former favourite of the House of York. He joyfully heard from Lord Clifford, of Hubert's successful search for the witness of one of the blackest of his crimes ; when the letters, intercepted by Conyers, were laid before him, his joy was yet more manifest, and he immediately ordered the moss-trooper to be conducted to his presence.

Their conference was brief and secret ; but, when Master Conyers came forth from the presence of the king, he was the bearer of a royal warrant, for the immediate arrest of Richard Carlton, for high treason, with an order for Lord Clifford, as a captain of the king's guard, to accompany him and Hubert, in search of the criminal.

“ In all the wars, in which I have been engaged, I have never drawn my sword in a better cause,” cried Conyers, after he had re-

lated to his friends, the result of his interview ; “and now, let us at once to work !”

Lord Clifford’s commands were quickly given, and, placing himself at the head of the little party of soldiers, with Hubert and Conyers on either side of them, they eagerly commenced their eventful expedition, leaving Andrews to return at his leisure to his abode.

The house of Carlton, was in Fleet Street,—but, when one of the soldiers, under pretence of being the bearer of a royal message, advanced alone to his door, and demanded admission, he was informed, that he had gone forth several hours before, on business with one of the aldermen of the City, who dwelt in Aldgate, and he was not expected to return till late in the evening.

It was already dusk ; but Lord Clifford and his companions, at once decided to proceed thither in search of him.

In silence and order, they hurried along

the streets with rapid steps, to take boat at the White Friars for Billingsgate—by which, they considered, that more than half an hour would be gained. Whilst proceeding from the river to Fenchurch Street, they passed the end of a small court, that led into Mincing Lane, directly opposite the house of Andrews. At the same moment, a man, carrying a torch, rushed so suddenly round the corner thence, as almost to be knocked back by the stalwart person of Conyers—with whom, he came full in contact.

Hubert knew him instantly, to be one of the apprentices of Master Andrews.

“By all the saints in Heaven, follow me!” he cried, ere any one could question him. “A legion of devils has broken into my master’s house, and he not at home to defend either his treasure or the women. Follow me without question, if you are real friends to him, or Lady Isabel, follow me!”

“Lady Isabel must be defended!” cried

Hubert, turning eagerly to his companions.

“ And Marion ?” was the sole reply of Conyers ; and, without taking further consultation, they hurried, at the head of their little troop, towards the house of the jeweller.

CHAPTER XII.

MASTER Carlton, after a secret conference with the king, had proceeded that afternoon, not to Aldgate, but to a piece of waste ground between the Strand and the river. A slight snow had fallen during the morning, so as to cover the ground with a crisp surface, about an inch thick—on which, his footsteps left distinct marks as he passed along. But, no other track was visible, when he arrived at the bank, where he paused, and gazed

anxiously around, as if expecting some one to join him.

He shuddered more than once, in the cold east wind, as he looked on the broad grey river, hurrying on at his feet. No bridge was visible from the spot where he stood, and only two or three small craft, could be distinguished through the mist ; all was gloomy, lonely, and cheerless.

The man of intrigue, unused to expose himself to the bodily discomforts of life, thought with regret, of the bright, coal fire he had left in his own private study ; but a strong interest prevented his returning thither, until he learnt the cause for which he had been summoned to a conference with Master Ainsley, and he commenced walking rapidly to and fro, as the best means of maintaining some warmth in his half frozen limbs, and giving vent to his impatience.

At length, when his back was towards the river, he suddenly heard the splash of oars upon the waters ; and, when he instantly

retraced his steps, he saw, with infinite satisfaction, a small boat rapidly approaching the spot where he stood. It was rowed by four men, and, ere it reached the shore, he distinctly recognized one of the party, who sat idle, to be his expected agent.

The strangers remained in the boat, whilst Ainsley sprang on shore ; and, with servile respect, approached the secretary.

“ Good day, to my most honourable employer and protector,” he said, “ I trust, you have not been long on the look out, in this cold wind ; but the current ran stronger against us, than I calculated.”

“ No matter for that,” answered the courtier, abruptly ; “ provided the tide of affairs is in our favor.”

“ In one way, it is—in another, it is not.” was the reply.

“ Answer me first—have you discovered any traces of Conyers ?”

“ I have ! A certain stable-keeper—in

whom he had placed confidence, applied to one of our band, to give him a passage to Ostend."

" Ha ! this sounds well ! When, and where ?"

" That matters not," answered the ruffian, " it is sufficient, that we drew from the unsuspecting fool, that their place of appointed meeting, was St. Dunstan's Church ; and, though, at that time, he slipped through my fingers, such a clue, was enough to set half a dozen of us to work ; and, we have, now, discovered the lodging to which he removed, after his mistress, who acted as his page in Redesdale, had given him warning, that we were on the look out."

" What ! Marion !" cried the secretary, losing, at once, all his assumed composure.

" I know not her name," replied Ainsley, " but, she has the largest black eyes, I ever beheld in a woman's head, in my life."

“ Proceed, said Carlton, sternly.

“ If you wish to catch them both together, you have nothing to do, but to go to a house in Mincing Lane—whither, one of us has tracked them from the neighbourhood of St. Paul’s, this morning, in company with that young varlet, who gave us such confounded trouble in the Blackfriars at Newcastle.”

“ What, Hubert Saville!” cried the secretary, eagerly.

“ The same !”

“ Knave, thou liest there—as surely as ever man lied, since the death of Ananias—for that young scoundrel breathed his last in the Tower, more than three weeks ago !”

“ It may be so, for aught I know,” said the ruffian, warmly; “ but, I wil be sworn, nevertheless, that he was seen to-day with Conyers—for, if I must speak plainly, it was I, myself, who dogged their steps.”

“ The gaoler cannot have cheated me, after

all!" thought Carlton, but he uttered not the suspicion.

"Whether it be, or no, it makes no matter," he said, "the others must be arrested without delay."

"It is for that reason," said Ainsley, somewhat sullenly, "that I have brought four stout fellows with me. But, can you make us sure, that the Queen Dowager will pay us roundly, for this fellow's head, as you before told me."

"Here are twenty angels! I have no more about me, at present," answered Carlton, delivering the money. "But, by mine honor, you have done your work so far bravely, and, when completed, I engage, you shall be richly paid."

"You are generous, Master Carlton, yet, must I tell you, bad news as well as good," returned the freebooter. "I learnt from the same fellow, that Lady Isabel Collingwood, has escaped from the Tower, by the help of Conyers, and, is now, safely lodged somewhere in this city."

“The devil!” exclaimed Carlton, who was so greatly dismayed by this intelligence, that he could not conceal, even from his miserable tool, the effect it produced on him. “Would that the old hag were at the bottom of the sea. You know where she lodges, you say.”

“Not I. But, as she and Master Conyers, only parted company for prudence sake, before they reached London, it is not unlikely, they have taken to the same roost, now they are safely at their journey’s end.”

“A bright thought, by the mass; and, if we can make sure of all the birds in the same trap, it shall be a lucky day for you, Master Ainsley. Call thy men!”

“Hark you, Master Carlton, there is some talk, that the name of Conyers is no longer on the list of traitors. What, if he hath got a royal pardon?”

“Bah!” cried the Secretary. “I saw the Queen Dowager this morning, and she knew nothing of the kind. She was more eager

than ever, for the fellow's life ! and remember, if he and Hubert Saville can both be dispatched in the confusion of their arrest, so much the better, for as they have powerful friends, the Queen fears their acquittal, should they be brought to trial."

" But should we take them alive, honored sir ?"

" Your good ship can put out to sea with them, and when a storm arises, they can be washed overboard, like noble Suffolk. The deep waters tell no tales."

" And the girl with the large, black eyes ?"

" Ah ! the girl !" echoed Carlton, and a darker and more terrible expression came over his pale face. " Let her be carried to your own lodging beyond the Tower. It is a lone house, and no cries can reach thence, to any human ear. And mark me, Master Ainsley, when you have left her there, no man must enter the dwelling save myself, till after you return from your voyage. You understand me ?"

The man smiled maliciously, as if he thoroughly comprehended the wishes of his employer, and then expressing his willingness to comply with them, he gave the signal for his men to approach.

When they obeyed, Carlton saw, with satisfaction, that they were four of the strongest fellows that could have been found in the whole city of London.

His extreme caution, rather than a want of courage, made him at first think of sending them alone to Mincing Lane, but since he had heard of the probability of finding Marion and Hubert likewise there, he felt that the affair was too important to be left to another's direction, and trusting that the evening, now rapidly closing in, would suffice to conceal the part he took in the transaction, he placed himself at the head of the armed freebooters, and commanded Ainsley to lead the way.

Unconscious that a more numerous party was advancing in another direction in pursuit of himself, he arrived at the house of

the jeweller, without being aware, from the darkness, to whose dwelling he had been conducted. Master Andrews was still absent on his expedition to Lord Clifford's.

Troubled and anxious was the heart of the intriguer, as his men knocked loudly for admission, for he felt that after all his long toils and many crimes, the fabric of his prosperity was but built upon sand, and if Hubert really lived, might by a change of the tide of fortune, at any moment, be swept to destruction. On the events of that night, he believed his future wealth and his future honors depended, and so strong was this impression, that he was prepared to have recourse to the most desperate extremities, rather than depart again from that house, without having secured his long hunted prey.

With such feelings, he lost all thought of caution, and no sooner was the door opened by one of Master Andrew's apprentices, than calling on Ainsley to follow him, he pushed through the narrow opening, and laid the

poor fellow flat on the ground, with a blow of his sword hilt, before he suspected the presence of an enemy.

The whole party quickly sprang over the body and secured the door within. They then gagged the fallen servant, to prevent his giving an alarm, and having bound his arms behind his back, followed Master Carlton, who having taken a lamp from a niche in the wall, proceeded to examine all the chambers on the ground floor. Not a living creature was there to be seen.

It was so long since the Secretary had been in the house of the jeweller, and it was so feebly lighted by the lamp he carried, that he failed to recognize it, even when he ascended to the upper story, and meeting no opposition, neither hearing any sound, he ventured, fearlessly, to pursue his search. It was evident that his violent entrance had excited no alarm, and had probably not been heard by the inhabitants of the dwelling.

He entered the ordinary chamber of the jeweller and the little cabinet beyond it, but

they were both dark and empty, and he began to imagine that the information of Ainsley had been false, and the whole house untenanted, till a light falling from a window, that opened on the inner court, directed him to the suite of rooms occupied by Lady Isabel.

The matron, engaged in her oratory, had not perceived the unwonted steps that disturbed the tranquillity of the dwelling, but Marion, who with the impatient ear of love, had long been listening for the return of Conyers, was in an outer chamber, eagerly expecting his appearance. She had heard steps and voices below, but stealthy and guarded, they excited no fears in her mind, for she believed they were alone occasioned by the entrance of Andrews and his companions.

Like a bird, newly escaped from its cage, that sits on a wavering branch, amidst newly budding leaves, and sings its happy carol to the bright spring air, so she, freed from the weight of shame and danger that had so

long oppressed her, exulting in her liberty, stood with bright, flashing eyes, and a heart throbbing with proud delight, thoughtless of danger, when the steps approached her chamber. Holding on high the light she carried, with step as light as in her childhood, she was hurrying towards the door, when it was suddenly thrown open, and Carlton stood before her, his armed attendants filling up all the dark recess beyond, with their ruffian figures, and dimly glittering arms.

Clasping her hands with a shriek of horror, she let her lamp fall to the ground, and started back as if appalled by an apparition from the dead.

In a moment the secretary was at her side, and seizing her with an iron grasp by the wrist, he cried, in taunting words : "No, fair hypocrite, this time you escape not from my hands so easily. This is no sanctuary, and here is no cunning priest, to stand between the heretic and the law. There was a time when I came to you with

offers of peace and you rejected them with scorn, which I have neither forgotten, nor pardoned. No, proud woman, you knew not the man you dared to trample on ! but now you shall learn to know him ! you shall learn that the revenge of Richard Carlton is relentless as death, in the pursuit of its victim. No resistance ! no clamour ! they are equally in vain—you are mine now, and for ever ; for though your cries should bring Master Conyers from his hiding-place, it will only be to his destruction."

" Monster !" cried Marion, her eyes flashing with scorn and exultation, " he is beyond your pursuit ; he is already pardoned by the king, and will revenge me if he cannot save, there at least thy revenge will fail to triumph, and though the daughter, like the father, may be thy victim, she will die with the proud conviction, that by royal favour the stigma of heresy is no longer attached to her name."

" Soldiers, pursue your search," said Carl-

ton, without replying to this proud burst of an indignant woman's heart.

But ere Ainsley, in obedience to this command, had advanced towards the inner door, it was suddenly thrown open, and Lady Isabel stood on the threshold, attired in the same deep mourning, she had worn ever since the departure of her son. Her tall, majestic figure was drawn up to its full height, as she regarded the intruders with indignant scorn.

"Back, minion!" she cried to the astonished freebooter, who mechanically obeyed her, "let women's chambers at least be free from your bold intrusion. Master Carlton, unhand that girl, or by the mass, thou shalt quickly be made to repent this audacity. Under what pretence hast thou presumed to force an entrance, with thy armed followers, into the dwelling of a peaceful citizen. Know you not, that in spite of the insolence of court favourites, every Englishman's house is his castle, and woe to him, who dares infringe the privilege!"

Carlton only answered by a contemptuous laugh, and then commanded Ainsley to bind the arms of the mad woman, whilst he made Marion secure ; and the rest of the party proceeded to search for Conyers and Hubert. But Lady Isabel, who had foreseen his intention, instantly threw open the casement near which she stood, and called loudly for aid.

“ Silence that witch’s clamour,” roared Carlton in a voice of thunder, and in his impatience he made a movement, as if he were about himself to seize the lady, but his attention was at this moment diverted in another direction, by a sudden attack made upon his men in the rear, by two of Master Andrews’ apprentices. They were both brave youths, but, unfortunately, unpractised in the use of arms, and not more than seventeen years of age. But the gloom of the chamber prevented either the character of these assailants, or the paucity of their numbers, being at first discovered, and Carlton, trusting that those whose destruction

he was most anxious to accomplish, might be amongst them, loudly urged on his men to the combat. Yet he relaxed not his hold of Marion. Vainly did she struggle to release even one of her hands from his iron grasp. With bitter words he derided her efforts, whilst Master Ainsley, with his drawn sword, prevented Lady Isabel approaching them.

“Yes, struggle poor worm!” cried Carlton, “it profits thee much to measure thy strength with mine. But thy resistance must soon have an end, thou wert a witness of thy father’s fate, and to-morrow such shall be thine—but first, thou shalt be made to feel that I make no vain threats! Insolent, thou shalt be crushed to the very dust before me, ere thy soul escapes from my revenge. By one way only canst thou purchase the hope of safety!”

“Hope! from thee!” responded Marion with a shrill laugh, that redoubled the rage of her enemy.

“Ay hope! Betray the hiding place of

Conyers and Hubert Saville, and by all the saints in heaven—thou shalt—”

“ Be lost to all eternity like thee ! No !” she cried, “ sooner would I this moment die beneath thy sword, sooner endure the fulfilment of thy worst threats, than place the lives of those two brave men at your mercy. I am not so feeble as to purchase life at such a price.”

The voice and look of Marion as she pronounced the words, made even Carlton shudder ; but his gloom was dispelled, by the loud laugh, by which his soldiers proclaimed their victory over the unfortunate apprentices, one of whom had fallen bleeding to the ground, whilst the other had taken to flight.

But those who pursued him, had not advanced many steps, ere with loud cries of consternation, they rushed back to their comrades. A blaze of light from half a dozen torches instantly filled the room, and shouts of “ a rescue ! a rescue !” from the well known voices of Conyers and Hubert,

cheered the hearts of the almost despairing women.

Carlton beheld the sudden change with utter consternation. The first figure he saw was Conyers, with his steel cap on his head, and his whirling battle-axe flashing in the light of the torches, towering above the throng, whilst Hubert, fully armed, forced the strongest of the freebooters, to retreat before him. The appearance of Lord Clifford, in all the splendour of his official garb, decidedly announced that they came with the royal authority.

Had he been made the dupe of the subtle king, was the first thought, that flashed upon his mind, and the blood forsook his cheeks, and his hands trembled with rage, when he heard the voice of the nobleman amidst all the confusion, cry aloud—

“ Lay down your arms, varlets, we come with his Majesty’s warrant for the arrest of Master Richard Carlton, as a traitor and a murderer.”

But still the men fought desperately, and

even Ainsley, leaving Lady Isabel at liberty, rushed into the thickest of the fray. It was not from any attachment to their vile employer, that he and his companions thus risked their lives in his behalf ; each man struggled only to force his way through the enemy, and effect if possible, his own escape, and Carlton knew their vile natures too well, to rely on their defence. He felt in the bitterness of his heart, that there was not a human being on the face of the earth, who would have stretched out a finger to save him ; and whilst the freebooters still held the soldiers at bay, he lent them no aid, he thought only of flight. He glanced from the window ; it was impossible to spring thence, without a certainty of death, towards the door of the same chamber, Hubert fighting with Ainsley, stood in such a position, as entirely to cut off that retreat.

Yet still he relaxed not his hold of Marion, and when again he heard the voice of Lord Clifford proclaiming pardon to all who would throw down their arms, except to

Richard Carlton, his countenance was darkened by an expression so diabolical, that even the heroic girl, who had hitherto known no fear, trembled beneath his fiendish glance.

"Thou at least shalt never live to aid in my destruction," he muttered almost inaudibly, and releasing, at length, one of the hands of Marion, he sought to draw his dagger; but, entangled in the folds of his cloak, in his hurry and agitation he was unable to find the hilt, till his minions threw down their arms, with loud cries for quarter.

Conyers, who had hitherto fought desperately, and was bleeding from a slight wound in the shoulder, had nevertheless observed his movement, and no sooner was he set free by the submission of his opponent, than he sprang through the confused throng to Marion's rescue, and ere Carlton could draw his dagger from its sheath, the battle-axe of the moss-trooper was raised above his head.

The Secretary cast Marion from him—he started back so as to elude the blow, and gain time to draw his sword—and deaf to the repeated cries of Lord Clifford, that he should lay down his sword, and yield himself a prisoner, he continued to fight with desperation, resolved that either he or his antagonist, should remain dead upon the spot. He knew that Conyers was the witness of his treason, he believed him to be the lover of Marion, and thus doubly the object of his hatred ; he felt, that if his own death was certain, its pangs would be diminished, by the knowledge, that this man had fallen by his hand, and lived not to exult over his destruction.

It was the remembrance of Marion's wrongs, that nerved the arm of Conyers with more than its usual strength in that deadly struggle, and her name, was the only sound that passed his lips, during the fierce, short and silent combat. All present looked with awe on a contest, that resembled an encounter between the sovereign of

the woods and a half-famished tiger, disputing their prey, so fierce, so relentless, and yet so skilful were the enemies, who thus had met, to wreak on each other, for a brief few moments, the whole force of their long cherished hatred and desire of vengeance. But even in the expression of their different figures, it could be seen, that Conyers fought for the just, and Carlton for the unjust cause. The frank countenance of the soldier, as he stood firm as a rock, dealing his heavy blows with unerring aim, shone with the noble scorn and indignation of an honest soul ; and conscious of right, the sentiment seemed to impart to his whole figure, a majesty, and a power, from which the strongest might have shrunk dismayed. Carlton on the contrary, wore that look of guilt, so indescribable, yet rarely to be mistaken by an observant eye, he thought only of revenge, and his subtle movements and lowering brow, betrayed the dark passions of his corrupt heart.

Neither party present interfered with the

combatants. The freebooters were careless of their employer's fate, now they were assured of their own lives. Hubert shrunk from staining his hands with the blood of a man, however base, to whose lands he was afterwards to lay claim ; the soldiers already exhausted, and embarrassed by their prisoners, and the aid necessary to be given to their wounded friends, seemed to forget that it was their duty to arrest the Secretary, till Lord Clifford called to them in a loud voice to seize the traitor, but the combat was at the same moment concluded ; the sword of Carlton, struck from his grasp by the battle-axe of Conyers, flew to the further end of the apartment, and the moss-trooper seizing him with a grasp of iron by the collar, could in an other moment have brought him to the ground, and ended his vile existence ; but even in the heat of passion, his noble nature gained the victory, and spurning the idea of taking a base advantage of an unarmed man, who had ceased to make resistance, he relaxed his hold and said, with a withering

smile of scorn, as he delivered him to the custody of the guards,—

“Yes, thou shalt live to grace a scaffold ! thou art not worthy to die by a soldier’s weapon !”

“Thou art right,” cried Lord Clifford, now interposing. “Justice, not violence must decide our prisoner’s fate.”

Carlton spoke not, when he found himself thus suddenly disarmed and in the custody of his enemies ; but a dark scowl was on his countenance, whilst the young noble consulted a few moments with his friends as to the steps next to be taken. The back of Conyers was towards him—he glanced cautiously around under his hanging brows—his guards were gazing on their leader in eager expectation of his next command. The moment for revenge was too favorable to be lost. He snatched the dagger he still retained from his bosom, and with the swiftness of light, aimed a deadly blow at the heart of his triumphant adversary. But Marion’s eyes were upon him ; yet quicker

than the stroke of his glittering weapon, she threw herself between the dagger and its object, and her faint shriek, as the steel pierced her side, first gave Conyers warning of the fate he had escaped.

Maddened with horror and rage, when he beheld Marion bleeding at his feet, and comprehended the cause, he rushed forward to take revenge on the traitor ; but one of the guard, who had seen all that had passed, though not near enough to prevent it, had already plunged his sword up to the hilt in the body of Carlton.

With a fearful groan the Secretary fell to the ground ; broken curses burst from his convulsed lips, and with threats of vengeance half pronounced, his soul departed to meet its doom in eternity.

Casting away his battle-axe, Conyers laughed with the wildness of a maniac, when he beheld this fearful spectacle ; then lifting the body of Marion from the ground, he turned his back upon the ghastly corpse, and as he pressed his insensible burthen

to his heart, burst into a passionate flood of tears.

“All won, and all lost!” he cried, covering her pale face with wild and earnest kisses.

Every one present crowded in terror around him, but he took no heed of their anxious and repeated inquiries ; he saw that the dagger had passed near the heart of Marion, and he was insensible to all else, as he gazed with unutterable agony on her pallid face.

Ere long, a thrill shot through his frame ; her hand moved in his ; her eyes unclosed, and in almost inaudible accents, she pronounced his name.

“Conyers, thou art saved,” she murmured, “kiss me once more—press me to thy heart—I am cold, very cold. Our happiness was too great for earth—but thou wilt remember me—and we shall meet again.”

Conyers spoke not ; he pressed his lips to hers ; and her head fell lifeless on his shoulder. He did not weep ; but he bent

down his head upon the corpse, in mute, maddening despair. His agony was redoubled by the consciousness that the angelic being, whom to shield from harm, he would have endured all tortures, had died to save his worthless life.

For hours it was impossible to separate him from the body, and it was even with the utmost difficulty that he was persuaded by Lady Isabel to lay it on the couch in her chamber, where, lost in prayer, he continued kneeling the greater part of the night.

The regret of Lady Isabel and Hubert was most profound for this fatal accident, and when Andrews soon afterwards arrived, his loud lamentations added still more to the desolation of the scene.

The gentle manners of Marion had already endeared her to his heart, and the childless old man felt, as he gazed upon her corpse, as if a newly found child had been thus cruelly and suddenly snatched from him by an assassin's hand, and he wept, not only her youth and her beauty, but the

future solitude of his own declining years. Lady Isabel too well knew the agony of such a loss, to offer him the smallest consolation, and her own satisfaction of Hubert's liberation from the persecution of his relentless enemy, was greatly tarnished by the death of the innocent victim, who had fallen the lost sacrifice to his crimes.

"Even if Marion had been an ordinary being," she said, "such a death would have been terrible; but to behold a creature so free from all taint of petty passion, so unselfish, so generous, so devoted in friendship and in love, thus untimely cut off, makes the old marvel why they are spared to encumber the earth with their worthless presence. My Lord Clifford!" she continued, turning with infinite dignity towards the young nobleman. "I thank you for all you have this night done for me and mine. I trust to your honour to inform the king, that though an awful calamity has occurred in this house, and that the blood of the innocent and the guilty has equally been shed, it was no fault of ours."

"Carlton merited his fate, my Lady," he replied, "were it only for the revolting murder which closed his career. Be assured, when his majesty knows all, he will rejoice that so black a villain, was thus promptly and justly punished."

By the command of the young nobleman, the corpse of Carlton was decently covered with a mantle, till it could be removed for interment during the night. He then dismissed Ainsley and his companions, with a strong reprimand, and ordered a handsome donation to be made to the apprentices as a healing balm for their wounds.

To Hubert he gave an invitation to accompany him to his apartments, which, though grateful for the attention, he nevertheless declined, preferring to remain with Lady Isabel, and unwilling to desert his gallant friend Conyers, in his affliction.

Far beyond the expression of words were the feelings of Conyers throughout that awful night. In his powerful character, strong in courage and activity, the force of despair was proportionally great, and for

awhile, threatened the destruction of his reason. Its intense agony was too keen to be endured, and his senses wandered at intervals, sometimes to Redesdale, where Marion, unconscious of his attachment, was ever at his side, or to that moment of ecstasy when in Margery's dwelling, he first learnt he was beloved ! But, oh, horror ! nought remained to him of that vision, but the corpse within his arms, and he loathed himself, that he had forgotten even for an instant, that Marion was gone for ever !

“ Soul of my soul !” he murmured, “ ah, had I cherished thee more, when thou wert with me, I now had mourned thee less ! and yet I loved thee Marion, I loved thee with a deep and silent strength, till honours, wealth, ambition, all, were shadows in my sight ! Fool, fool ! that I delayed so long to tell thee so.”

It was a relief to Lady Isabel and Hubert when they knew that the body of Carlton was removed to its last resting place, but Conyers appeared unconscious of all, save

his affliction. He never slept, he scarcely tasted food, but sat for ever gazing on the corpse ; and Hubert, fearful for his life, hastened the preparations for the funeral, trusting that this might give a new turn to his feelings.

No one had seen Conyers shed a tear after the first shock of Marion's death, till her body was lowered into the grave. But as the earth rattled on her coffin, he flung himself on Hubert's bosom, and wept tears of bitter agony.

Thus relieved, he quickly regained the mastery over his feelings ; and even in the church-yard, he signified to his friends, his intention to bid them an eternal farewell.

“ To that house I can return no more,” he said, “ all I valued in the world is lost. Henceforth I devote my life to meditation and prayer, in the seclusion of a monastery, and if ever you behold another mound beside the grave we have just closed, you will know that Marston Conyers has escaped his trials here, and has gone to rejoin the pure

being who lived and died for him. Heaven bless you Hubert, may your love prove more fortunate than mine. And Lady Isabel—my noble—my long tried friend—peace be unto you till we meet again."

So saying, the soldier, without waiting for any reply, hurried from the place where he had laid his treasure, and was no more seen, nor heard of amidst the busy scenes of life.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE great stream of time, still flows on with equal rapidity amidst joy and sorrow, like a rapid river perpetually chequered by changing sun-shine and shadow.

Another week passed away, and Lady Isabel, who still, by the jeweller's invitation, remained an inmate of his dwelling, was sitting near a table in her chamber, her eyes glistening with tears, as she turned over a number of ancient letters and papers, that

lay scattered before her, and read short paragraphs therein. She was still clothed in mourning ; but, instead of her ancient habit, she wore a rich robe of black velvet—more in accordance with the fashion of the time—and her thick veil, was replaced by one of the finest texture.

Mistress Ellen Collingwood, with a happy, though agitated countenance, attired in a full court dress of silver tissue, and her hair braided with gems, occupied a chair near her ; and, though she spoke not, she glanced ever and anon, with blushing anxiety, towards the door.

Directly opposite to them, stood Master Andrews, and a tall venerable priest, with a long grey beard, that swept his girdle. The countenance of the churchman, beamed with an expression of pious benevolence, that at once bespoke the character of the man, who refused a bishoprick, and, on whose tomb it was engaved, “ that all prelates might admire, but few, or none, could imitate, Sir Christopher Urswick.”

“Holy father,” said Lady Isabel, at length, “it is a sad narrative, you have recounted to me, of the death of my son, and his young wife. I should have been spared much agony, had you trusted, more than twenty years ago, to my will and my power, to protect their orphan—yet, I pardon your doubts of my intellect and strength of mind, when I remember, that Hubert owes his life and education to your fatherly protection ; and may, perhaps, have yet to thank you for the restoration of his inheritance.”

“I trust, that his majesty has never had reason to doubt my word, Lady Isabel,” answered the good man, solemnly ; “and, I have no fear, that he will dispute it now, when I, who united Reginald Collingwood, in holy matrimony, to the daughter of Lord Selwyn, and myself, baptized their lawful son—over whom, I have ever kept secret watch, since the hour of his birth, when I swear, that Hubert

Saville, is this sole heir, and lawfully begotten child."

" Yet it was strange he answered not, when you submitted the papers to his notice ; and, I hear, that agents have already, been sent to the north, to take possession of the lands, that by Carlton's death, were considered to devolve to the crown."

" That was done, ere my return from France," was Urswick's reply.

" And think you, he will restore that, of which he hath taken possession ?" demanded the lady, eagerly.

" His majesty is just, although he considers all things cautiously, ere he pronounces his decision," said the priest, solemnly. " His majesty is pious—and, believe me, that though his reserved temper, leaves his subjects somewhat in ignorance of his true character ; and, some ill-timed acts of economy, may have rendered his generosity suspected, he sincerely loves his people. Even the humblest in the

land, will have reason to rejoice, that throughout his reign, the rights of the weak are defended against the aggressions of the strong. No iron baron, will, for the future, be able, in defiance of the law, to crush the poor, or the industrious, to the dust; and, if I know the king, as, I believe I do, I dare assert, that he would rather cut off his right hand, than sanction the plunder of the aristocracy, by being himself, the first to rob an orphan of his rightful inheritance."

"I trust, your judgment erreth not," said the lady, "but, here comes my grandson," and she turned, with sparkling eyes, to gaze on the noble figure of Hubert—who now entered the room, richly attired, in accordance with the rank, to which the discovery of his birth, entitled him.

With a joyous smile, he saluted all present, in Ellen, having sprung forward to welcome him, hand and hand, they advanced towards their grandmother, before whom,

Hubert bent his knee, as he bowed and kissed her hand.

"Bless thee, son of my first born," she said, as she laid her thin fingers on his shining locks. "Like a messenger of peace, thou camest in thy childhood, to beguile my sorrow, and lead me on along my dark and thorny path, though a mist was between us, and I knew not the fulness of my joy. But now, the darkness is dispelled ; and, though certain, at length, that my Reginald is in the grave, I no longer feel, that I have lost him, when I clasp thee, his son—his living image, to my heart."

"When I was the poor child of your bounty, I loved you with a son's affection," he replied, pressing her hands in his, as he arose ; "and now, when by the right of birth, I may claim your affection, believe me, it shall be my proudest task, to merit it, and share it with her, who is, equally deserving of your love," and he gently took the hand of Ellen, and placed it in that of Lady Isabel.

" You are right, my son," said the matron, " you are both my children ; and, though your consanguinity is a temporary bar to your union, I trust, that the time is not far distant, when all obstacles removed, Sir Christopher Urswick, may join your hands in the holy bonds of wedlock, as now, I unite them in love," and she placed the hand of the blushing girl, in that of Hubert, as she spoke. " Take her, my son," she continued, " she is worthy to be a good man's wife ; and, henceforth, let all dissension cease in the house of your fathers."

After these words, the youthful pair knelt, with involuntary awe, to receive the blessing of their sole surviving relative ; and, when the solemn benediction was pronounced, Ellen, forgetting her habitual dread of her grandmother, took her hands in hers, and kissing them, repeatedly moistened them with tears of gratitude and joy.

" Arise, my children," said the lady. " The

hour is rapidly approaching, which the king has appointed for our reception ; and, if the horses and litters are in readiness, it would be well to prepare for our departure."

Master Andrews, now ventured to interpose, and assured her, he had seen all in order, a quarter of an hour before—and, no further reason for delay existing, they agreed at once, to set off for the palace. Hubert led Lady Isabel to the litter prepared for her, and Master Andrews followed with Ellen, who took her seat opposite to her grandmother. The young man then sprang on the noble horse, that by his grandmother's command, had been richly caparisoned for his use, and Sir Christopher Urswick, mounting his sober mule, they proceeded, followed by a train of attendants through the City, to the great entrance of the palace at Westminster.

It was a day of public reception, and the royal chambers were crowded with guests,—with whom, the story of Hubert's birth

and claims, and the merited fate of Carlton, were already common subjects of conversation.

When, therefore, a gentleman in waiting, announced the name of Lady Isabel Collingwood, and the tall majestic figure of the matron, emerged from the crowd near the door, conducted by Sir William Stanley, the lord chamberlain ; and followed by her grandchildren—at whose side, walked the royal almoner, Sir Christopher Urswick, and my Lord Clifford—the wonder and curiosity of the court circle, was excited to the highest pitch.

More than forty years had passed, since the lady had appeared amidst those brilliant scenes ; and scarcely any of the great, who surrounded the throne in her youth, survived to welcome her return. With proud, and lofty bearing, she passed along, amids the whispering throng, in the chamber of audience, directly to the foot of the throne.

But, after being presented to the

king, by the lord chamberlain, and kneeling, and kissing his hands, she did not pass on, like those who had preceded her.

“ My Sire,” she said, arising, and remaining standing in front of his Majesty ; “ after forty years of seclusion, I have, this day, appeared in the royal presence, not only, I confess, to offer my homage to my Sovereign, Lord, and King, but to petition him, to authorise, by his royal command, the only surviving son of my first born child, Reginald Collingwood, and his wife Margaret, daughter of Lord Selwyn, to resume his lawful name, together with the lands and other possessions of his ancestors.”

“ Lady,” returned Henry, in a bland voice, “ this case has, already, been brought under our notice, by our worthy almoner. The evidence of the papers he has laid before us, as well as his own testimony, are indisputable ; and, we have despatched messengers to the north, to secure to him, possession of the lands, which, after the death of Richard

Carlton, would, otherwise, have reverted to the crown. It is our pride, that justice should be done to all our subjects ; and we rejoice in an occasion to prove, that we are not unmindful of the long services of your Ladyship's family to the House of Lancaster. Hath Lady Isabel, any further petition to make ?”

“ Your Majesty's generosity, has surpassed my desire,” she returned. “ I have not words to speak my gratitude ; but, though I am a feeble woman, who, weakened by age and long affliction, lacks power to serve the throne ; the sword, and life, of the grandson—to whom, with the grace, and justice of Edward the Third—your great ancestor, you have restored his long lost rights, will be for ever, devoted to your service.”

“ If that fair youth, who standeth by Lord Clifford, be he,” said the king, with an unwonted smile, “ let him now be presented to us.”

In obedience to this command, Hubert advanced ; and, with a palpitating heart, knelt

down before his majesty. Yet, strange perversity of human nature, amidst all that pride and pageantry, he thought only of the farmer's stable, where they had once passed a night together.

After the usual ceremonies were performed, Henry suddenly drew his sword, and waving it above the head of the kneeling youth, he cried in a loud voice—

“ Arise, Sir Hubert Collingwood ! My lords, and gentlemen,” he then said, addressing those who stood around the throne, “ think not, that I have bestowed the honor of knighthood lightly—on one unworthy to wear the spurs, but on a brave soldier, and gentleman, whose honor, and courage, I have put to proof ; and, to whom, during the chances of war, I was, myself, indebted for my life.”

It was a proud moment, for Lady Isabel ; and yet more proud to Hubert, to hear the service he had so faithfully concealed, thus openly acknowledged by his sovereign.

A universal murmur of astonishment and approbation, pervaded that noble assembly,

—but it was instantly hushed, when the voice of the king was again audible.

“Sir Hubert,” he said, “forgetting the debt I owed you, you have demanded nought but justice, it is now my duty to think of your reward. Some whispers have reached my ears, of certain love passages between you and your fair cousin, and as we know of no better present we can make to a faithful servant, than a true and virtuous wife, we now bestow on you, with our full consent to your marriage, as soon as the Pope’s dispensation can be obtained, the hand of Mistress Ellen Collingwood, *The Ward of the Crown.*”

So saying, the king, with profound solemnity, joined the hands of Hubert and his fair cousin, and blessing them, as a father would have blessed his children, broke up the assembly.

No obstacle occurred to prevent the marriage of Hubert and Ellen, when the dispensation of the Pope, which their consan-

guinity rendered necessary, was received from Rome. Till this ceremony was performed, they were compelled to remain in the Metropolis, but the home of their childhood was still the green spot to which their hearts clung with fond remembrance, and thither, to render their happiness complete, their footsteps turned, as soon as their union made them free to quit the precincts of the court.

After Lady Isabel had witnessed the union of her grandchildren, and Hubert's restoration to his rights, only one thing remained wanting to fulfil all her long cherished desires ; and that was the accomplishment of her vow to lay the body of her son Reginald, with the ashes of his fathers.

Sir Christopher Urswick had, by minute inquiries, aided by his own previous knowledge, discovered his burying place at Hexham, and as soon as Hubert's wedding was over, she hurried secretly, and alone, old and feeble as she was, to superintend the removal of her long lost son's body.

It was a day never forgotten by the villa-

gers, when, at the head of a solemn and magnificent procession, the widowed mother, returned after four and twenty years of mourning, with the body of her eldest born, to lay it in the vacant place, which had so long awaited the eorpse, in the old Church of Bellinghem.

Hubert walked at her side, and notwithstanding her advanced years, she seemed, through that trying hour, to have recovered all the vigour and energy of youth.

But her task was no sooner accomplished, than the strength which the soul alone had given, vanished. A peace, like a foretaste of heaven came over her long agitated mind—An ineffable calm, undisturbed either by desire, or regret. She smiled on Hubert, whenever he approached her, but she spoke not, and three days after she had laid her first born with his fathers, she sunk into a soft sleep, from which she never woke again. She passed to heaven unconscious that she left the earth.

It may be some satisfaction to the reader

to know, that Master Ainsley and more than a dozen of his companions having engaged in Perkin Warbeck's conspiracy, were all hanged at Tyburn, and that Apsley, the gentleman gaoler of the Tower, soon after Carlton's death, incurred the displeasure of his Majesty, and after being tried and convicted of sundry illegal practices, and the whole of his ill-gotten wealth forfeited to the crown, he died of want, in a miserable cellar near London Bridge.

Master Andrews continued a few years longer, to toil on in the dark air of the city of London, in pursuit of wealth ; but though he yearly added to his store, his gains afforded him no pleasure, since by the death of Marion, he had lost the last scion of his family.

He made many attempts, but all in vain, to discover the abode of Conyers, till at length, a second mound in the church-yard, proved that the broken hearted soldier had departed from earthly sorrow. Hubert and Ellen did all that kindness could dictate to

induce the old man to join them in the North, but the chains of habit were too strong to be broken, and he clung to his ancient modes of life, till weary of toil, and riches, and solitude, he dropped into the grave, leaving the whole of his vast wealth to endow a Hospital in the city of London.

THE END.

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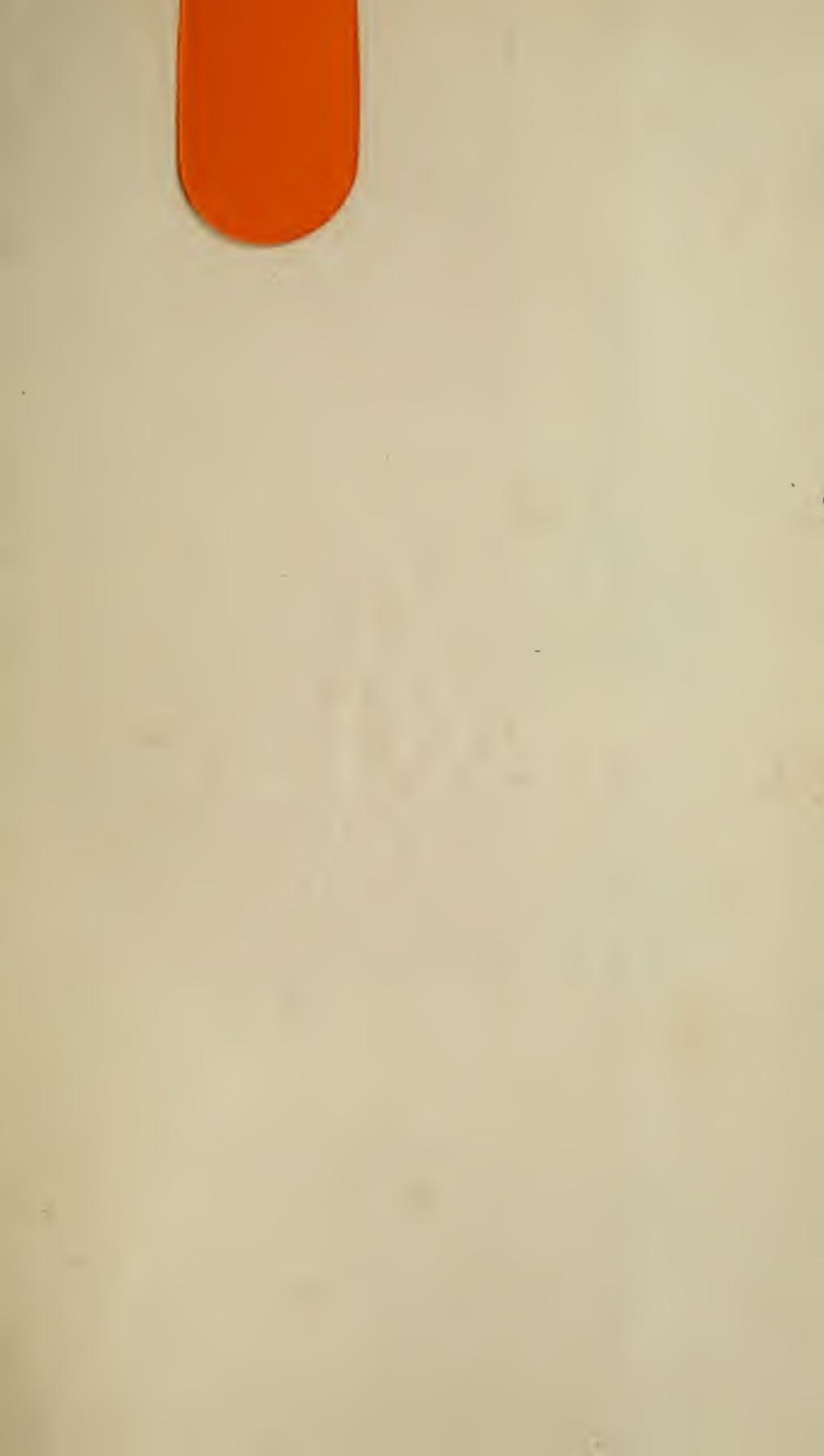
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